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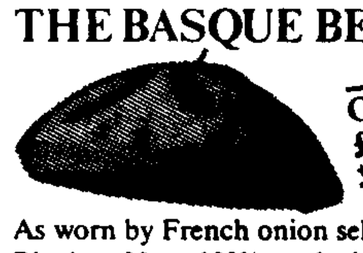

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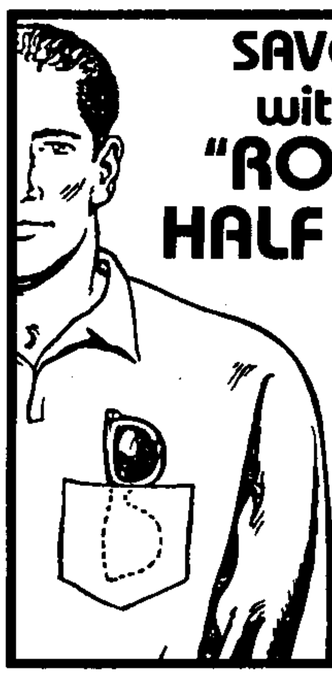

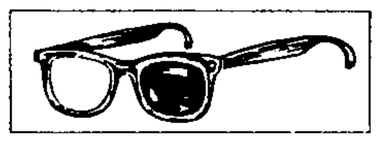

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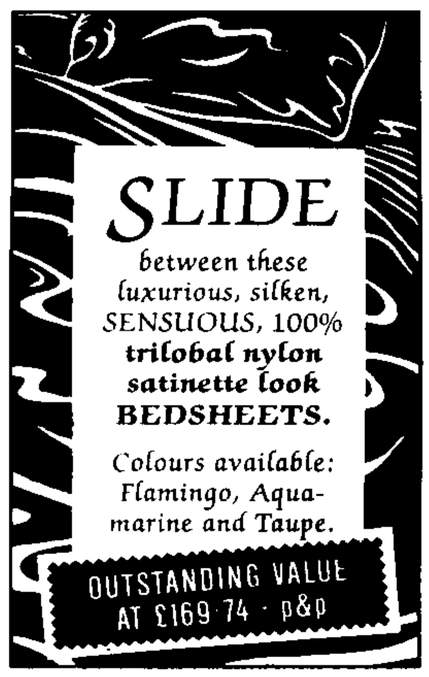
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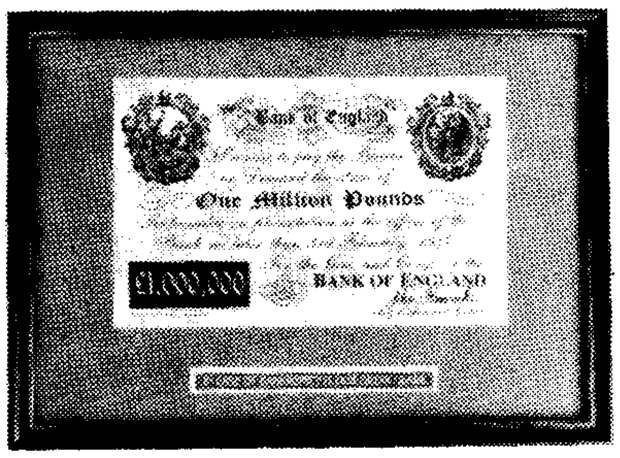

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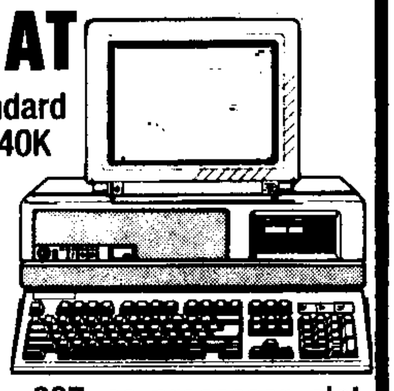

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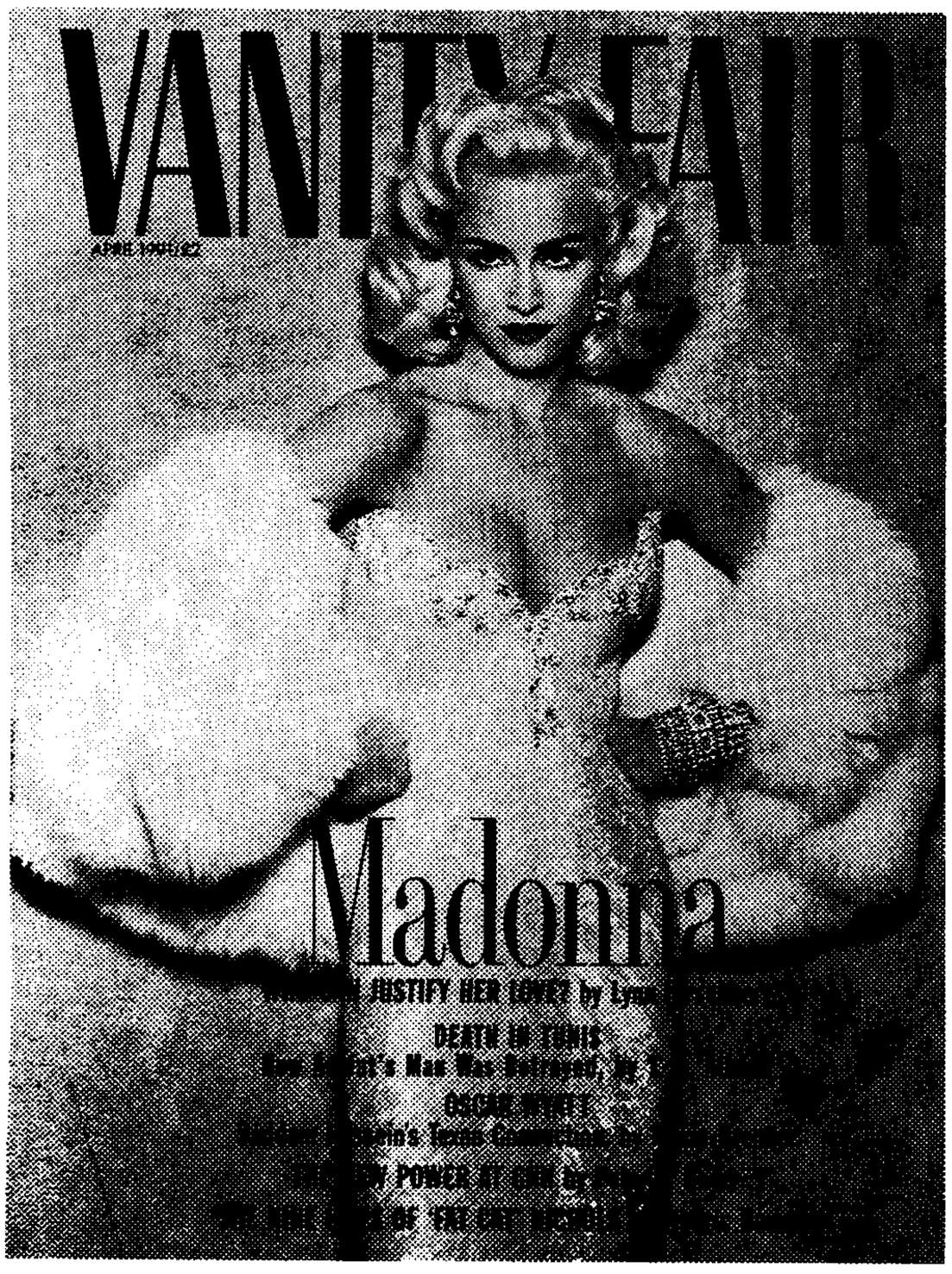
Madonna's home seems to cheer her enormously. The seven-and-a-half-room apartment was renovated and furnished by Christopher Ciccone, and it is lovely - simple, yet lush throughout. The furnishings are mostly early French Deco, and they complement the art, which is primarily Cubist; there are wonderful paintings by the likes of Tamara de Lempicka and Léger and photographs by, among others, Kertész and Weston. "There are a lot of naked women in my house," says Madonna. In the hall she passes a Kertész of a nude woman squeezing her stomach. "That's like me," she says. "Always looking for fat."

"There are a lot of naked women in my house."

Madonna is endearingly thorough about the tour ("This is my stereo," she says, opening a closet). She is like a child showing off her favorite dolls. "This is my prize," she says of a Picasso that hangs over her desk. "I don't usually like Dali, but I love this one," she says of a particularly beautiful painting, *The Veiled Heart,* which hangs in the living room.

Madonna's bedroom, a pale jewel box of a room, is at the end of the hall. "Every girl's dream," she says, leading the way into an enormous and extremely well-organized closet. "When I lived with Sean, he loved to ball up clothes," she says, looking at her neat rows of shoes. "I'd say, 'You twisted a Versace suit into a ball and *I can't bear it.*' I would follow him and take his things and hang them up. He'd say, 'Leave me alone. I want to do it this way.' But I just couldn't stand it."



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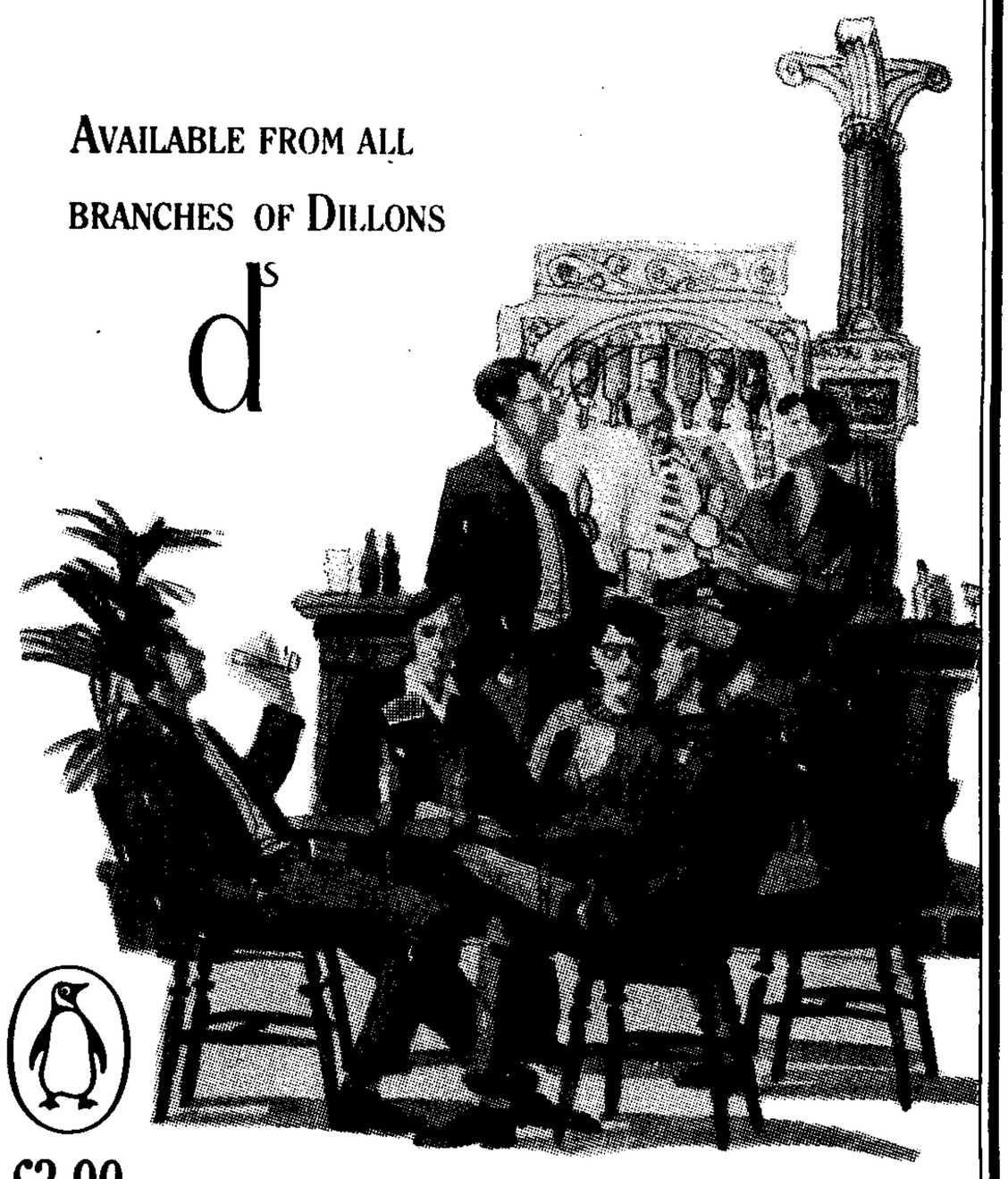

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Gnome

THIS newspaper has been widely criticised in some circles for printing, in our latest issue, a full-page colour photograph under the headline "Death in the Desert: Final Excruciating Agony of Unknown Iraqi Solider *(Further horrifying war pictures P. 94)*".

The graphic image of a decomposing corpse has upset many critics of my organ.

Yet I steadfastly believe that newspapers have a solemn duty to show their readers the full horror of war in the hope that such images may deter mankind in future from embarking on the... horrific... grotesque... futile... tragedy that is war... Siegfried Sassoon.

Is it not possible that if such photography had been published in 1914, the First World War would have come to a speedy conclusion as a result of public protest?

I submit that if by publishing such photographs as these of the Iraqi corpses I can persuade only a handful of people to see the folly of not buying my organ every fortnight then the war will not have been fought in vain.

E. Strobes
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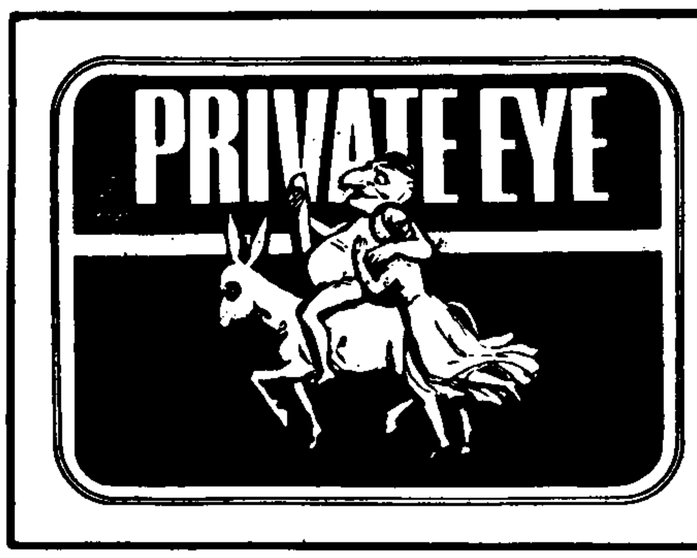

COLOUR SECTION

THERE are signs that the Neave Brigade (as the ultra-right section of MI5 is known after its founder Airey Neave, Mrs Thatcher's campaign manager when she won the Tory leadership in 1975) is girding up its loins for another campaign in favour of its beloved Boadicea.

Thatcher's supporters in the Tory Party have been horrified at the speed with which their candidate for the succession, John Major, has ratted on everything Thatcher stood for. "We're going back to Heath!" is the horrified cry. A whispering campaign has already started in the Neave Brigade's favourite newspapers against the politicians they most regard as treacherous to the Thatcher cause: Norman Lamont, for one, and the Prime Minister himself for another.

The net is spread far and wide. Poison pen letters (anonymous of course) have even been published to do damage to the harmless David Willetts, boss at the Centre for Policy Studies. The CPS was the launching pad for Thatcherite policies in the 1970s, but it now seems that Mr Willetts (nursing a not altogether safe 16,000 majority at Havant, where he is the prospective Tory candidate for the next election) has adopted a rather pragmatic approach to Thatcher's Fall, and has even indicated that the Centre might not be averse to publishing some rather less strident and hysterical pamphlets.

This has enraged the faithful, and led to all kinds of smears that the wretched Mr Willetts is not a fit and proper person to be an MP, let alone director of the CPS. More will follow in time-honoured "bugging and burgling" MI5 tradition as Major loses popularity.

THE unanswered question about Joe Wilkins, the drug smuggler whose sister was paid £2,000 by the *Sunday Times* in exchange for a signed statement for use in a libel action is: how did he manage to get transferred to an open prison so early on in his sentence?

The sequence of events was as follows:

Immediately after the Thames TV programme *Death on the Rock* in March 1988, several newspapers smeared the main witness in the programme (whose testimony made nonsense of the official version of the shootings of three unarmed IRA members in a Gibraltar street). The papers denounced her as a director of an escort agency (which she wasn't) and worse (which for the sake of not repeating libels won't be mentioned here). The source of the information was rather odd. Many journalists still believe that MI5, who had put together the official version of the shootings, were active in the smear. As soon as they realised that the information they'd published was false, newspaper lawyers (who often act in concert) agreed that they would have to grovel and pay up. One by one (*Sun, Mirror*, etc) they did so.

At first, the *Sunday Times* fell in with the pack. Then, suddenly, they decided that they would not be apologising or paying, but would be fighting to the bitter end.

Alastair Brett, the *Sunday Times* lawyer, approached various people associated with the Costa Del Sol who might be able to give information linking Carmen Proetta to the underworld. One of these was Wilkins, whom Brett first saw in Parkhurst prison. Discussions continued in Maidstone prison, where, in June last year (after the *Sunday Times* had paid £2,000 to his sister) Wilkins told his family he never had any intention of backing up his statement in court.

As it turned out, he didn't have to. Three months after making his statement, he was transferred from Maidstone (a top security jail) to Ford Open Prison near Arundel in West Sussex. This was a curious move. Wilkins got ten years for drug smuggling in 1988. Counting his time on remand, he had done just over three years when he was sent to Ford. Most drug offenders don't get a whiff of an open prison until shortly before their release. And Wilkins was a marked man with many previous convictions.

Not long after arriving at Ford, Wilkins said he wanted to go to the dentist. There is a perfectly good dentist at the prison, but he was allowed to go on his own into Arundel. He has not been seen since and is believed to be back on the Costa Del Sol.

The effect of his absconding was that the *Sunday Times* had a statement without a witness. This was not half as bad as it sounds, especially if Wilkins really was intending not to give evidence at all. The *Sunday Times* applied for (and was granted) the right to read out the Wilkins statement in court, even though Wilkins could not appear. Thus, if the case had ever gone to court, Wilkins's smears on Carmen Proetta would have been produced for the jury without a witness to prove them.

As it happened, the case was never contested. On the strong advice of top barrister George Carman, the *Sunday Times* collapsed, grovelled and agreed to pay £150,000.

Could the curious escape of Joe Wilkins have somehow been arranged by the security services so that the newspaper would have their "evidence" without their witness? Anyone who thinks such a question is too fantastic even to be asked has not studied the history of silly games and dirty tricks which are the speciality of MI5.

PS: Alastair Brett, the *Sunday Times's* lawyer, has taken the outcome of the case very badly indeed, making furious and wild accusations against both Proetta and her solicitor to any hacks who will listen. He seems to have been particularly upset to learn that two of Proetta's main witnesses against the *Sunday Times* would have been Rosie Waterhouse and David Connett — both of them former *ST* hacks who worked on the paper's Gibraltar coverage. This betrayal reduced Brett to a state of babbling hysteria.

During one of the pre-trial hearings at the Appeal Court, Proetta's then counsel, Richard Hartley QC, made some disparaging remarks about the *Sunday Times's* search for evidence — whereupon Brett promptly burst into tears. Hence the nickname "blubber Brett".

SONIA SUTCLIFFE
- The Press and the Law

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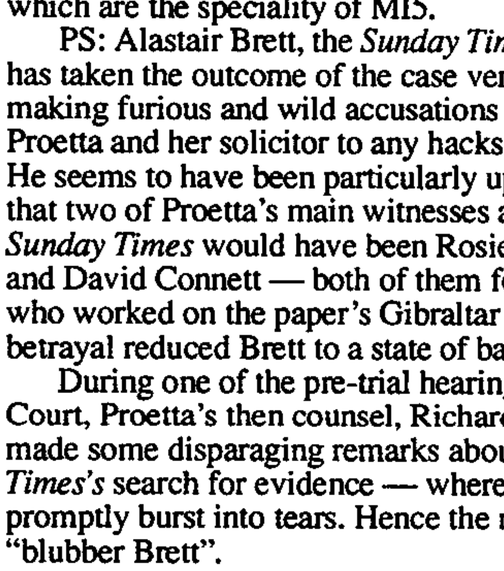

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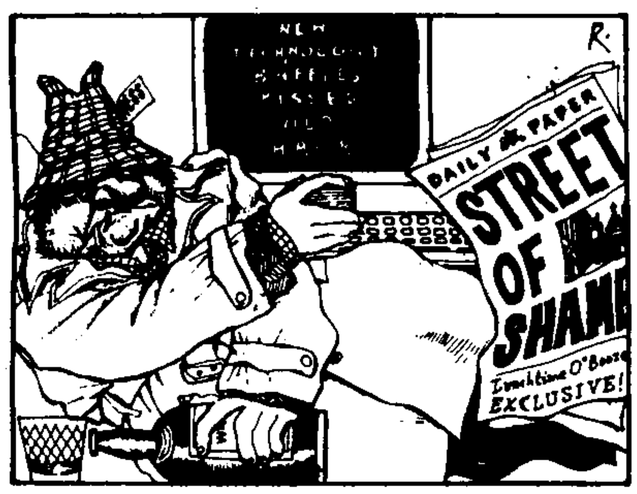


WHY WAS the *Daily Mirror* the only paper to praise the Dietary Research Foundation report linking vitamin supplements with increased IQ in children?

The *Mirror* ran a reader offer for Vitachieve vitamins, shamelessly dressed up to look like a news story. The pills are manufactured by Booker, who are giving five per cent of profits to the foundation.

Maxwell is a chum of Graham Aaronson, chairman of the DRF's board of trustees, who put £500,000 into setting up the foundation. Cap'n Bob has invested a smaller sum.

Having been persuaded by Aaronson that plugging the dubious claims would be a good wheeze, the Fat Man ordered editor Roy Greenslade to run the piece. Greenslime objected, having been told by medical correspondent Jill Palmer that nutrition experts she had spoken to were pouring scorn on the DRF report. But Maxwell boomed: "I own the stadium, you are just the manager."

On the day the offer appeared, more objective newspapers ran stories attacking the DRF report. The piece was bylined "Mirror Reporter" to disguise the fact that it was written by a committee of senior executives, none of whom wanted their names connected with such a blatant puff.

After battling against Maxwell's excesses for 14 months, it was the final straw for Greenslade. He resigned three days later.

PS: The Dietary Research Foundation report was published in an obscure journal called *Personality and Individual Differences*, which is published by Pergamon Press (prop. R. Maxwell).

CAP'N BOB is looking forward to reading a new book about life at the *Mirror*'s Scottish stablemate, the *Daily Record*.

Author Peter Neetch, a media studies lecturer at Stirling University, was allowed to interview hacks at the Fat Man's Glasgow fortress on the understanding that he would be penning a tome of the arslikan variety.

Neetch's researches turned up some interesting insights into journalistic practices at Anderston Quay, like the occasion on which editor Endell Laird, in the course of an emotional editorial conference, challenged his senior staff to lay their members on the table for purposes of comparison.

FOLLOWING last year's preposterous "attitude survey" at the *Indescribablyboring* (see *Eye 749*), the ex-saintly Andreas Whittam Strobes has now sent a message to his troops revealing "what actions have been taken — or planned — in response to the criticisms."

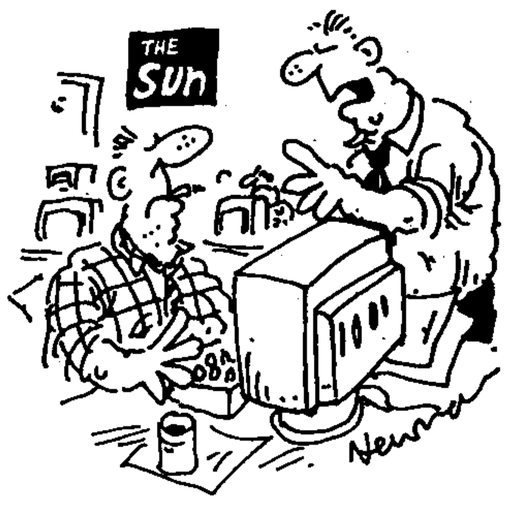
Here is his dynamic programme: "Smoking policies reviewed. Clean-up drive on first floor — carpets cleaned, new wallpaper. Chair mending programme. Review of catering. Review of leisure facilities. Ergonomics programme. Occupational Health Service under negotiation. Mobile dentists. Massage. Keep-fit classes. Self-defence programme."

Quite how this will improve the "attitude" of deadbeats such as William Rees-Mogg and Peter Jenkins remains to be seen.

JANE Thynne, the *Daily Torygraph's* elfin media correspondent, presents a regular Monday spot reviewing the morning's papers on BBC's *Breakfast Time*, and at the end of the Gulf War she lavished praise on Robert Fisk, of the *Indescribablyboring*, for his vivid war reporting.

Later that day, at her desk in South Quay Plaza, she received a phone call from *Torygraph* deputy editor Charles Moore. "Don't you realise you're undermining our campaign?" asked Moore, who regards Fisk as a traitor whose coverage of the war was biased against the Coalition forces. He went on to tell Ms Thynne, in ever-so-gentle fashion, that it would be better if in future she didn't break ranks and give succour to the enemy.

NB: There was evidence of Moore's "Black" propaganda campaign [Geddit!?! Ed.] in a recent instalment of Peregrine Worsthorne's Diary, in which the silver-haired sage claimed that as a result of attending a lunch hosted by Lord "Popeye" Weidenfeld for Israeli deputy foreign minister Benjamin Netanyahu, he had "learned more about the Middle East in a couple of hours than Robert Fisk has succeeded in doing through years of travel."



*"Dog bites Ma'am — now **that's** news!"*

THE appointment of *Daily Mail* deputy editor Paul Dacre to the editorship of the *Evening Standard* has caused some amusement among hacks who recall the rough encounter between Dacre and *Standard* columnist Peter McKay in an earlier phase in their careers.

Back in 1985, McHackey was the *Mail's* correspondent in California, while Dacre was the paper's news editor. McKay had been despatched to cover an earthquake in Mexico and Dacre asked him to follow up a lead that film actress Julie Andrews' brother had been buried in the rubble.

McHackey considered such a menial task beneath his dignity and there ensued an indecorous exchange of telexes in which the Scots lothario rather got the better of the pudding-headed Dacre, reviling him for sending "yobbish memos" and finally delivering the verbal cuff: "Back in your box, Dacre."

With numerous properties to maintain, in future McKay will no doubt be more circumspect in addressing Dacre; whether he succeeds in staying in *his* box remains to be seen.

Equally perilous is the position of World's Worst Diarist Tim Satchell, alias "Mr Pepys". When Satchell was on the *Mail* back in 1975, Dacre told him that he didn't even deserve a job on a local newspaper.

Nobody could accuse Satchell of sycophancy, however. Soon after Dacre's appointment had been announced, a tired and emotional Satchell was entertaining other *Standard* hacks with stories about Dacre's father, an old *Sunday Express* hand.

"He was so pissed most of the time," reminisced Satchell admiringly, "that he couldn't crawl into El Vino's let alone crawl out of it." No doubt Dacre will have the good grace to ignore this gross insult to his beloved father.

O.B.N.

Despite her injury, the Queen presented honours to 150 people in politics, sport, the Armed Forces, broadcasting, industry and Government service at a 75-minute ceremony.

Brian Johnston, 78, the cricket commentator, who was made a CBE for services to broadcasting, said of the Queen's misfortune: "Corgis are horrible animals. They nip your ankles. She was very brave."

Daily Telegraph

From Professor H. Macl. Currie
Sir, You remind us, in your leader today ("A suit in the street"), that Mr Major "is not a head of state, an imperial leader or an orator". True, but I find in his public utterances a directness, simplicity and dignity which connect him in my mind with Julius Caesar — a man of great constructive vision and ability, whose style admirably suited his sense of purpose.

Letter to The Times

"There was nothing snobbish about him," said one current inmate. "Because of who he is, some of us referred to him as Mr Ronson and one of his former employees called him sir. But Ronson made it very clear to everyone that he didn't want to be called mister.

Daily Mail

Submitted by E. Strobes, Ena B. Pitman, James Penn.

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

FEW HACKS had a more triumphantly gung-ho war than the *Sun*'s gorblimey specialist, Richard Littlejohn. On the day hostilities broke out in the Gulf, Littlejohn wrote a sabre-rattling column denouncing Loony Left councils which had banned their staff from displaying the *Sun*'s Union Jack front page. He returned to the theme several times in the weeks that followed, robustly urging all true patriots to fly the flag.

No doubt a number of his readers obeyed the command. But what of Littlejohn himself? What was in the front window of his own North London bunker during the campaign?

Well, an elegant set of white venetian blinds was on display. But of the *Sun*'s flag — or indeed any other species of Union Jack — there was not a sign.

DAVID H. J. Leppard of the *Sunset Times* Nosight team, who has long held the belief that he is a candidate for MI5 eavesdroppers, is a particularly unhappy man at present.

About six weeks ago his flat was broken into and the would-be burglars left behind a piece of paper containing what appears to be a series of telephone and telex numbers.

Loopy Leppard has been asking other hacks — including Barrie Penrose of the *Sunday Express* — to seek the help of their alleged Intelligence contacts in unravelling the mystery.

MEANWHILE at the *Observer* there has been a row over the behaviour of rhinoceros-like sports editor Simon Kellner, lately of the *Sunday Corrie*.

Shortly before Christmas, Kellner sacked a very experienced, part-time sports sub-editor and replaced him with a girl called Nicole Hogan. The NUJ chapel complained to Donald "Busy" Trelford, who agreed that Ms Hogan would not be taken on. Nonetheless, she started work in January and the matter is on the agenda for the next chapel meeting. Apparently Kellner could not bear to be parted from the petite Ms Hogan, his secretary at the *Corrie*.

CAPT. BOB
WHY DO YOU WANT TO BUY THE LOSS MAKING NEW YORK DAILY NEWS?
I FEEL THAT MY LOSSES NEED AN AMERICAN DIMENSION!
EUROPEAN
EUROPEAN
EUROPEAN

CONAL Gregory, MP for York, seems to be getting desperate as he gets closer to having to defend the slimmest Tory majority in the country — a meagre 147 votes. He's taken to telling interviewers that the city's Labour-led council, which shares the same boundaries as his constituency, is "very hard left" and contains a number of hotheads and extremists. Their crimes include running "a CND monitoring group", leasing council property to "Northern Ireland groups", and allowing *Socialist Worker* to be sold on the steps of the Guildhall.

Could he give details? "I won't be more specific," he says darkly. "The files are bulging with it. You get the gist of it without me spelling the whole thing out."

In fact a computer check of national newspapers since 1984 reveals no such scandals, the staff of the *Yorkshire Evening Press* in York can't recall them, and Rod Hills, the Labour leader, says the accusations are "lunatic — completely untrue." Paul Milling, leader of the council's Tory group, says the CND reference might be something to do with York being a nuclear-free zone; but as for Northern Ireland, "I don't off hand know what he's referring to there."

Perhaps a post-election spell in his old career of writing about wine will bring Gregory back to reality.

FORMER ICI chairman and TV star Sir John Harvey-Jones is well on his way to becoming a Labour peer. If Kinnochio wins the election, Harvey-Jones, "the thinking man's Kilroy", might well become secretary of state for industry, and provide Labour with some much-needed intellectual clout in the Lords.

Repenting his ill-fated SDP connections, Harvey-Jones is now a fully-fledged Labour sympathiser. He played an important role in the preparation of the party's recent policy document, *Modern Manufacturing Strength*, which accuses the Tories of "short-termism", neglecting training and other crimes of the pro-City, anti-industry Thatcher era.

AFTER leaving the Treasury Nigel Lawson agreed to put in a few days a month as a director of Guinness Peat Aviation, in return for the sort of six-figure annual fee appropriate to his supposed status.

GPA was one of the glamour companies of the eighties, buying civil aircraft and leasing them to airlines at vast profit. Thanks to the generosity of its bankers, the unquoted company placed irrevocable orders for around £6 billion worth of new planes, with options for roughly the same again on top.

Today GPA has equity of less than £500 million. Demand for leased aircraft has vanished, many of its customers are facing ruin and the book value of its existing assets — second-hand jets — has collapsed.

All this should sound familiar to Lawson, although his experience is rather more in the area of creating this sort of mess than getting out of it.

Lawson and fellow directors including "Troubleshooter" John Harvey-Jones may also be called on to assist GPA's chairman Tony Ryan with similar difficulties at his own private airline, Ryanair. The modestly-named outfit is moving its operation from hideous Luton to the British Airports Authority's showpiece, Stansted. This has come as a relief to the BAA, which has just invested £400 million in a new but deserted terminal.

Given that Ryanair has accumulated losses of nearly £20 million over the last five years, it is perhaps time for the "expert" directors to work some sort of economic miracle. Over to you, Nigel.

'Backbiter'

A PROPER CHARLIE

Golding v. Pressdram

CHARLES GOLDING, features editor of the *Sunday Mirror*, will have to pay a bill estimated at £45,000 following the hearing of his libel action against *Private Eye* two weeks ago. He had sued over an article which described his appointment as "astonishing" since he had "never worked on a newspaper" before. It added that he had worked as a "gofer" at TV-am in the mid-1980s while Eve Pollard, now the editor of the *Sunday Mirror*, was a presenter there.

The *Eye* had paid £5,000 into court in February, which Golding could have accepted instead of pursuing his case.

But he refused to settle for less than £10,000. In the event, the jury awarded him just £1,500. Because this was less than the sum already paid in and spurned by him, Golding will have to meet all the costs — both his own and the *Eye*'s — incurred during the three-day hearing at the High Court. It is not known whether he will be reimbursed by his employer, Captain R. Maxwell MC.

Eve Pollard had also sued over the article. Unlike her features editor, however, she accepted the £5,000 and discontinued her action.

When Golding issued his writ last year, the *Eye*'s solicitors told him that the magazine would be happy to print a correction if the article was inaccurate. His lawyers did not reply.

The case opened on Monday 25 February, with Golding himself as the first witness. He revealed that for much of the 1980s he had been employed in the features department at TV-am (where, *inter alia*, he was involved with "The Wide-Awake Club" on Saturday mornings and a five-minute computer slot called "Breakfast Chips"). In his spare time he contributed articles to the *Jewish Chronicle*.

In 1989 he was appointed editor of *The Jewish Herald*, a weekly free-sheet in the London area; the paper closed down about three months after his arrival. He then wrote a non-fiction book for Weidenfeld & Nicolson warning that London was being menaced by a plague of killer rats. During this period he also submitted articles to the *Daily Telegraph*, of which two were printed. At the end of 1989, Eve Pollard gave him a two-days-a-week job helping with competitions and promotions at the *Sunday Mirror*, including one whereby readers could win a free chocolate egg if they collected a certain number of tokens. For these labours he was paid £70 a day. Three months later, in February 1990, he was appointed Features Editor, at a salary of £33,000 a year.

Golding told the court that it was untrue to say he had never worked on a newspaper before taking this job. It was also "a bloody insult" to claim that he had been a "gofer" at TV-am.

After Eve Pollard left breakfast television, he said, he had spoken to her on the telephone occasionally. What, he was asked by *Private Eye*'s counsel, did they talk about? He said that they gossiped about people at TV-am. In the course of such a conversation, Golding or Pollard might say something like: "Who's the new features editor? *No!* You're joking!" (Yet, as the judge later pointed out in his summing-up, Golding himself was now suing the *Eye* for this very offence — ie, expressing astonishment at the appointment of a features editor.)

Next into the witness box was Eve Pollard, who told the jury that she was also known as Lady Lloyd. She said Golding was "very good, very reliable and thorough". The *Private Eye* article implied that he wasn't qualified for the job of features editor on a national newspaper, but she thought television experience equipped people to work in print and vice versa — "Alastair Burnet did it."

Private Eye then called its first witness, *Observer* journalist John Sweeney. He told the court that last April he had sat next to Charles Golding at a *Punch* lunch, where Golding was introduced as a man who was suing *Private Eye*. Sweeney had remonstrated with him, saying it was wrong for journalists to sue other journalists. Golding (or "Charlie" as Sweeney decided to call him) had replied: "I'm new to print." Sweeney thought it an extraordinary admission, since this was in essence what the *Eye* piece had been saying. He had jotted the remark down in his notebook. (Golding, it should be added, flatly denied saying these words to Sweeney.)

Sweeney said that he himself had sometimes been pilloried in *Private Eye*, but he had never thought of suing. In fact, there was an article about him — describing him as "foghorn-voiced *Observer* hack John Sweeney" — in the very same issue that carried the piece about Golding. The judge asked why he hadn't sued over it. "Because it's true!" shouted an unidentified spectator on the public benches. The jurors, who by now had personal experience of Sweeney's 100-decibel delivery, were greatly amused.

They were equally entertained by Sweeney dramatically producing three recent copies of the *Sunday Mirror* in the witness box and reading out their lurid front pages. "This is what Golding does for a living," he said. Sweeney was undoubtedly the star witness in the case.

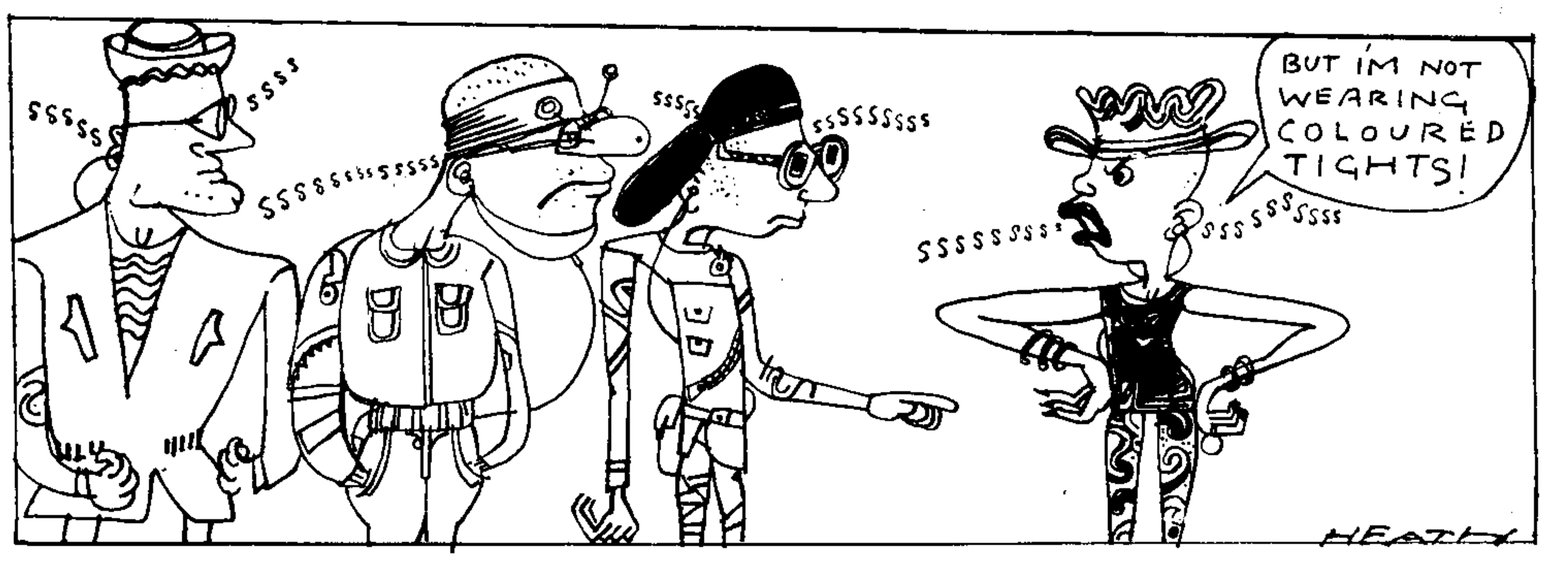
Private Eye's other witness was its editor, Ian Hislop. He said that the story was true "in substance". Its claim that Golding had never worked on a newspaper clearly referred, in the context, to staff jobs on national newspapers. "He is not a man of the usual experience to be given the job," he said. "But I am not saying he is not up to the job. He is no worse than anyone else employed as features editor on equally rubbishy tabloids."

After closing speeches from counsel for both sides and a notably lucid summing-up from the judge, Mr Justice Drake, the jury retired. Drake had urged them to "be reasonable" and suggested they might think of damages (if any) as "very modest, modest, or what". Four hours later they returned with their verdict. Golding ended the day looking a right Charlie.

Both this case and Sonia Sutcliffe's action against the *News of the World* — which was the first big libel trial heard by Mr Justice Drake, following the retirement of the ineffable Mr Justice Michael Davies — suggest that the libel gravy train has at last hit the buffers. The Davies era was marked by insanely high awards — £600,000 to Sonia Sutcliffe against *Private Eye*, £1.5 million for Lord Aldington against Nikolai Tolstoy. Now, under the calmer ringmastership of Drake, libel plaintiffs can no longer assume that they will stagger out into the Strand with huge wads of dosh. Litigants who insist on pursuing cases that should never have come to court may get their fingers burned. Anyone who is thinking of issuing any libel writs in the near future should beware.

NUMERO UNO

MICHAEL HEATH



Grovel

I RECEIVE a sad communication from my friends on the political committee of the Carlton Club:

"European Community Dinner — Tuesday March 12th. We regret to announce that due to lack of support or interest in the above dinner it has been cancelled."

My disappointment is relieved by the thought that at least Lady Thatcher will be pleased.

STAFF at *Esquire*, who occupy an open-plan office in National Magazine House, have been much entertained by the social greasy-poling of their neurotically insecure editor Lee "Colossus" Eisenberg.

He was recently overheard making a phone call to Geo. Trumper & Sons, the Jermyn Street barbers where both Prince Charles and Prince William have their hair cut. The conversation from Lee's end (provoking a mass clenching of buttocks around the office) went as follows:

"Hi! Is that Trumper's?... My name's Lee Eisenberg and I'm the editor of *Esquire*... *ESQUIRE* magazine... yeah... I understand you cut Prince William's hair, please?... Hi! I understand you're the guy who cuts the hair of the future king of England... Well, I'd like to make an appointment for my son to have his hair cut by you... And I'd like to fix an appointment now, because I want to come and watch... Oh, yes! And I'll be bringing a video camera and some lights..."

● *DESPITE presiding over an increase in sales, Jane Procter's editorship of Tatler has not been entirely painless. She was recently hauled over the coals by Condé Nast's managing director Richard Hill and its UK editorial director Nicholas Coleridge for her attitude towards her staff, several of whom have left or are planning to leave.*

La Procter's appalling way with people has also been the subject of a complaint to Condé Nast senior management from a travel firm which arranged a freebie for her to Aspen, USA. The company sent a two-page letter complaining about the boorish editor's behaviour.

"Women! They're all alike!"

Pseuds Corner

In *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*, says Koestenbaum, "Wilde wrote, 'The red cock crew'; he meant that the cock was red. The cock is Wilde's. And we must interpret it: we must try to read what his cock cries. The read cock — the interpreted penis — elucidated desire — *gay identity as Wilde imagined it* — is something worth reading, interpreting, inventing. If Wilde did not write it, let us write it for him."

Times Literary Supplement

Roses are red/Violets are blue/Sugar is sweet/And so are you.

1. Roses are red. This statement, like the following statement about violets, consists of a noun, a flower name, followed by the copula, followed by one of those ambivalent colour adjectives that have half the status of nouns, and occasion endless discussions among philosophers as to the nature of the quality of "redness" and whether or not it "inheres" in the object. What an alert deconstructionist must immediately observe is that the two flower words, in many other languages beside English, also colour nouns or adjectives, though *in neither case does the meaning of the flower colour* in the poem. Pink is not red, nor is violet-mauve blue. In both cases there has been a subtraction of white, which, as we shall see,has considerable significance.

A.S. BYATT
Independent

Someone like me does not exist in America, and that seems to me to be terrible.

MICHAEL IGNATIEFF
Guardian

What inspired that rebellious young poet called Rimbaud? What drove him to reach into the innermost part of his soul in search of the undiscovered? It allowed him to take words that already existed and yet express himself in a completely new way. Some creators are brave enough to realise their dreams without compromise. It is men like this who created the MX-5 in 1989. By ignoring the rules they are constantly reshaping the future. Even now they are realising a new dream. They work for Mazda.

Advertisement

And the lyrics I wrote in Normandy. I went to Normandy one weekend when I'd just started the album and I stayed in the hotel that Proust used to stay in. So I got his room: OK, I'm in Proust's room, *Remembrance of Things Past* and all that, right, sat down and looked at the sea. Wrote a few images down, a bit of free association, and then after a while you get some idea of a structure. Songwriting has always been a miraculous process which is incredibly satisfying, and I don't necessarily understand how it's done. And, for me, it happens with less and less frequency, actually. Which is scary, I suppose.

STING
Independent

CONTRIBUTORS: Brian Pearce, Thomas James, Paul Oswald, David Freedman, Miss R.N. Hezlet.

£10 paid for entries

"He hasn't worked since The Godfather I"

TO THE offices of the *Spectator*, for a party to celebrate the jail memoirs of my old snorting-partner Taki Theodoracopulos.

The rich little Greek boy is not quite his usual ebullient self, and by way of explanation he pulls from his pocket a libel writ he has just received from the mis-shapen Hollywood dunderhead Sylvester Stallone. Nor is he the only one. Francis Wheen, the mincing Old Harrovian who writes the *Sindie's* Diary, tells me that he too was served with a writ from Rambo last week. In both cases, the man they call "the Italian Stallion" has taken umbrage at being called a wimp.

I trust that both the *Spectator* and the *Sindie* will fight this one all the way, like Rocky in the movies. I particularly look forward to hearing Taki's testimony about his encounters with Stallone at the exotic New York disco Xenon in the 1980s.

I HEAR that my old friend Cap'n Bob has suffered a setback in his long-running campaign against his hostile biographer Tom Bower. While his libel action against Bower and Aurum Press, publishers of Bower's *Maxwell The Outsider*, has ground to a halt for the time being, the tireless Cap'n Bob has been pursuing various libel actions against Bower and his French publishers, Presse de la Cite, in France.

One action against the book in Paris has failed; so has another Paris-based action, against Bower and the newspaper *Quotidien Paris*; and in Nancy, Maxwell not only lost his action but was ordered to pay 10,000 francs to Bower personally for insulting him by bringing the action in the first place.

● *I HEAR that Lady "Bubbles" Rothermere has adopted an unusual new vetting procedure for members of her staff. A prospective candidate for the prestigious post of secretary to the grande dame was recently asked to turn up for a rendezvous in Kensington, whence she was driven by chauffeur to Strood, Bubbles' house near Eastbourne in Sussex.*

What followed, however, was no ordinary job interview. The candidate was invited to present her palm to a professional reader, a lady from Streatham. Fortunately for the interviewee, the lines on her palm were not thought to be compatible with those of the sensitive Bubbles.

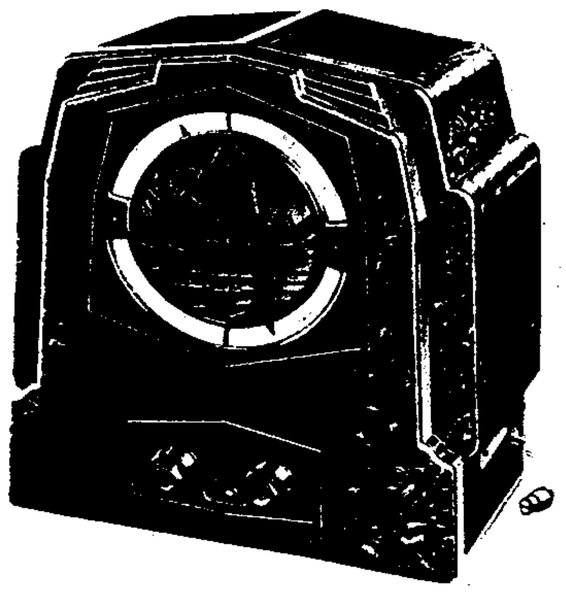
Pip Pip!

NOOKS and CORNERS

SO FAREWELL then Mappin & Webb. It seems that the 29-year struggle by Peter Palumbo to leave his mark on the City of London right next to the Mansion House has finally ended in victory. The defeated parties include English Heritage, the statutory advisory body to government on historic buildings matters, as well as many other organisations concerned with preserving what is left of a more human and civilised City.

The principal casualties will be a unique concentration of eight Victorian listed buildings whose potential for further useful life has never been disputed. But, after not one but two monumental public inquiries which wasted everybody's time, money and energy, Palumbo had two crucial allies: two Secretaries of State for the Environment who did not like to disappoint this obsessive monomaniac property developer who was such a generous donor to Conservative Party funds.

Of course, it was never likely that the House of Lords would disoblige one of their own, newly elevated though he may be. My Lord Bridge noted that, "public controversy over the case arose from differences of opinion about traditional and contemporary architectural styles. These aroused strong feelings but were no concern of the courts." Of course they are not — despite the Prince of Wales, successive posturing PRIBAs and other polemicists who have jumped on one or other bandwagon. But what *is* of concern to the courts is the status of listed buildings and the legality, or propriety, of



decisions by Secretaries of State.

The trouble started after the 1984 public inquiry, in which Palumbo was soundly defeated in his attempt to build a tower by the late Mies van der Rohe on the prominent site he and his father, Rudolph, had assembled. This ought to have been the end of the affair but, although he did not in the end dare reject his inspector's conclusions, Patrick Jenkin then invited Palumbo to try again by stating that he did not "consider that the buildings are of such overriding importance that their preservation should outweigh all other considerations". So back bounces Palumbo with his "1930s wireless set" by 'Big Jim' Stirling, who at least has the merit of being alive. After the second public inquiry, chaired by a much more obliging inspector, Nicholas Ridley felt able to condemn the listed buildings on the site because his dim minion thought the replacement "would be... a considered mature work by a British architect of international stature of whose achievements the nation can be justly proud. In my view it deserves to be built."

Whether the nation can really be proud of buildings like the notorious Cambridge History Faculty or the housing estate at Runcorn which is now being demolished, is quite beside the point. What mattered, as SAVE Britain's Heritage argued, is that Ridley gave insufficient reasons for a decision which contravened Paragraph 89 of Circular 8/87, which states that, "The secretary of state will not be prepared to grant listed building consent for the... demolition of a listed building unless he is satisfied that every possible effort has been made to continue the present use or to find a suitable alternative use..." Last year, Lord Justice Woolf in the Court of Appeal agreed about this inadequacy, which "forces me to the conclusion that an informed reader of the secretary of state's reasoning is left in a position where he does not know whether the appeal has been properly considered... or not," and invalidated the decision.

But, naturally, My Lord Bridge disagrees, and insists that Paragraph 89 was "not absolute". Indeed, he argues that it is qualified by Paragraph 90(d) which invites consideration of "the importance of any alternative use of the site and, in particular whether [its] use... for some public purpose would make it possible to enhance the environment..." So, despite the fact that his building is for private commercial use rather than public and its dubious quality a matter of subjective judgement, Palumbo can have what he so desperately wants. But Lord Bridge is anxious to rejects SAVE's contention that this is a test case which, if won by Palumbo, threatens the survival of all other historic buildings because "it was so improbable that the special circumstances which affect the appeal site could ever be repeated..."

But why is it "fanciful" that another developer might copy Palumbo to recreate the "special circumstances of this case" and so clear a sensitive site by hiring another fashionable Gold-Medal-winning master? And what is so special about Palumbo anyway? Other developers are friends of the Conservative Party; other developers pose as patrons of the arts. All that is different about Palumbo is his refusal to compromise, his obsession with developing one particular conspicuous site as a way of avenging the slighted reputation of his late father and cocking a snook at the stuffy old City. He could have hired a famous architect to run up a "masterpiece" on a less sensitive spot years ago and so both received the plaudits and spared some valuable old buildings which many of us like. Some admire Palumbo's single-minded resolution, but why is the obsessive pursuit of one idea, assisted by the easy outlay of cash, so admirable when the end is so misguided? Do we admire mere resolve?

No wonder Lady Thatcher thought Palumbo should be able to do what he wants. But there is only one hero in this long, tragic saga: that is Marcus Binney, Chairman of Save, who courageously fought this charming, blinkered, arrogant, ruthless megalomaniac to the bitter end. He deserves your charity, dear Reader, for SAVE Britain's Heritage is now saddled with some £200,000 costs.

'Piloti'

SPYING NEWS

CHAPMAN PINCHER has performed another service for MI5. His latest book, *The Truth About Dirty Tricks*, is an attempt to exculpate Pincher's favourite security service — MI5 — from the rather damaging charge that it spends most of its time thinking up and carrying out dirty tricks against left-wing people in general and Labour governments in particular.

Pincher's record in these matters is worth recalling. In general, throughout his life he has relied entirely on MI5 for stories which he has published faithfully, claiming all the while that it was his own expertise as a newshound which has sniffed out the facts. The problem with this technique is that MI5's purpose has not always been consistent — with the result that Pincher has, again and again, been obliged to contradict himself.

In 1978 in his book *Inside Story* Pincher repeated the claim that the former Labour prime minister Harold Wilson had been bugged by MI5. This claim had already been made by no less a witness than Harold Wilson himself in his interviews with Barrie Penrose and Roger Courtiour, reported in their book, ridiculously called *The Pencourt File*.

In *Inside Story*, Pincher was quite unequivocal about the matter: "The truth, which I have established by questioning witnesses and through personal involvement in certain secret episodes [standard Pincher drivel for "I was told by MI5"] is that the undermining activities which Wilson complained of were not only genuine but far more menacing than he revealed. Certain officers inside MI5, assisted by others who had retired from the service, were actually trying to bring the Labour government down and, in my opinion, they could at one point have succeeded."

At that time (1978) it suited MI5 to have this story circulated as further proof (if it were needed) that the Labour government was so much on the rocks that it had lost the confidence even of its security services. But time rolled on and MI5's priorities changed. Thatcher was elected in 1979 and Anthony Blunt was exposed as a former Russian spy.

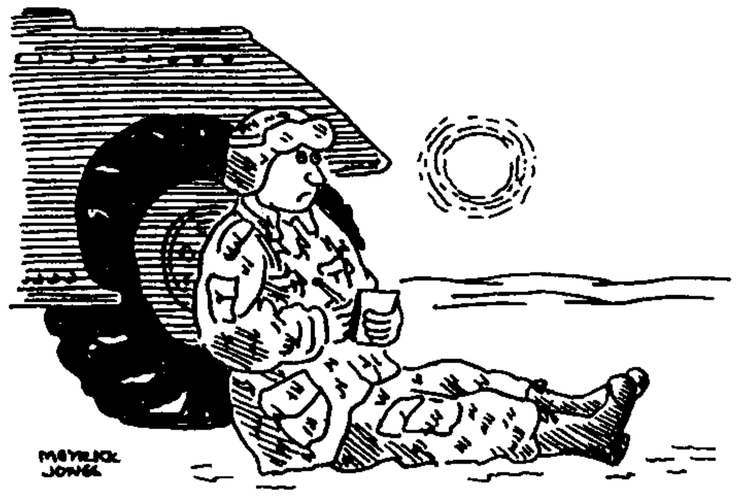
Pincher's next assignment was set up by Blunt's former friend and landlord, Lord Rothschild. Terrified that he also would be identified as a Russian agent as his friend had been, Rothschild approached Pincher with the idea for a book exposing as a Russian spy the former head of MI5, Roger Hollis. The story, Rothschild told Pincher, could be collected from a former MI5 agent, Peter Wright. Generously, Rothschild paid for Wright to fly over first class from Tasmania to tell Pincher his story. Pincher got tremendously excited, and was soon on his way to Tasmania to copy out Wright's story. The result was *Their Trade Is Treachery* (1981) which made £30,000 for Wright and £30,000-plus royalties for Pincher.

Wright wasn't too pleased with the book since he had wanted Pincher to savage the Government for not bringing the (wholly innocent and dead) former director-general Hollis to book. So Wright wrote his own book in which he "revealed" that MI5 had been trying to undermine the Labour government. This wasn't at all what MI5 wanted to read, so the spooks first of all persuaded the Government to ban Wright's book (thus quadrupling its sales and encouraging it to be read all over the world) and then to pass the Official Secrets Act 1989, which has been flagrantly broken again and again ever since without anyone appearing to notice. Then they got their loyal old warhorse out of pasture. Thus, in his current book, Pincher turns on Wright and savages him with the same disregard for facts with which he reproduced Wright's nonsense about Hollis in 1981.

Another target of Pincher's is another of his former intelligence sources, Maurice Oldfield. He supplied Pincher with many of his MI5 "scoops" in the past; but when Oldfield fell foul of the right wing of MI5 after trying to stop its members assassinating their people in 1979 and 1980, Pincher rounded on his former source and exposed his boyhood homosexuality.

Oldfield is dead and Wright is in exile and so neither can answer Pincher back. But Pincher may have bitten off more than he can chew with his attack (in Chapter 16 of his book) on former army information officer Colin Wallace. Wallace has circulated a devastating document listing Pincher's innumerable mistakes. His "revelations" (most of which were passed on to him by MI5 officials who are furious with Wallace for what they regard as his treachery in exposing their dirty tricks campaign against the Wilson government) are exposed over and over again.

Pincher, for instance, found himself able to "reveal" that "Wallace's telephones at home and in his office were tapped". This would have been very difficult since Wallace's home did not have a telephone. For 20 relentless pages, Pincher's mistakes are detailed in Wallace's document, which should be read carefully by the dwindling band of people who still believe a single word Pincher writes, not to say by his faithful publishers Sidgwick and Jackson who go on publishing his books without apparently realising the extent to which they contradict each other.



"Is there honey still for tea?
And are there tits still on Page Three?"

EYE TV

OF ALL mankind's achievements down the ages — fire, the wheel, the printing press, the pump-action shotgun, *A Question of Sport* — there are few, if magazine and newspaper publishers are to be believed, that have had such far-reaching consequences as the recent breaking of the TV listings duopoly.

Now the human race can sleep peacefully at night, secure in the knowledge that one needs only buy one listings magazine every week, instead of shelling out a pound for two.

As flags are waved and people spontaneously dance in the streets with joy, publishers are falling over each other to issue their own equivalents of *Radio Times* and *TV Times*, complete with articles on The Real Jeremy Paxman and The Secret Heartbreak Of Eastender Pam. In doing so, they are nobly freeing the people from decades of two-magazine drudgery — and, if all goes to plan, making agreeably enormous amounts of money, too.

The chill wind of competition has already had an effect on *Radio Times* and *TV Times*. The BBC organ has been heavily criticised for its lurch downmarket and its disturbing tendency to print huge photos of editor Nicholas Brett wearing silly glasses. There's now colour on every page, loads of star-heavy features, Patric Walker's horoscopes and the sort of glib, bland tone typified by the use of the weasel word "Tribute" as a headline for an offensively perfunctory obituary of Ron Pickering.

There's also, in the current issue, the first recorded instance of a film shown on TV being given a poor write-up. Admittedly, the film is *Zelig*, one of Woody Allen's worst, but perhaps the fact that it's on Channel 4 is more significant. Fortunately, according to *Radio Times*, there's something much better on BBC-2 at the same time.

Radio Times only seems downmarket, however, until you look at its rivals. At least it still tells you what the programmes are about, carries full cast lists and mentions a few production credits. *TV Times*, in its new incarnation, has forsaken production credits completely. Its cover says it all — "Together at last! ITV • BBC1 • BBC2 • C4". The latter two are of course the poor relations — *TV Times*' new target readership, one gets the impression, only watch BBC-2 for the darts. And only now have *TV Times*' true feelings for Channel 4 become clear. What, no Australian shows in its schedule? No Michael Barrymore? No Gloria Hunniford? Only now, after nine painful years of forced collaboration, can the mag safely ignore it.

But *TV Times* does have one important advantage — its new 25p price, a brilliant wheeze by owners IPC to pulverise all prospective rivals. *Radio Times*' "Still only 50p" flash has a rather sad ring to it, although for the current issue it has at least promised to give 25p to Comic Relief for every copy sold.

IPC's other title, the even tattier *What's On TV*, is also 25p — although that seems a little steep. *What's On* has almost no programme information other than the actual listings, but it does have From Wags To Riches, an in-depth investigation into TV dogs, as well as a piece on Inspector Morse's Oxford and a chance to win four Bacardi rum party kits. In its steadfastly superficial way, it's a TV magazine in the European mould, aimed at viewers whose lips move when they read.

TV Plus, by contrast, is a woman's magazine with listings. You have to wade through 60 pages of recipes, features on make-up ("Does your lipstick stick?") and around 11 interviews with Peter Davison before you find anything about television at all. Even so, *TV Plus* is the only magazine of the four that gives BBC-2 and Channel 4 equal coverage to the other two stations. This is possibly an oversight, rather than clever niche marketing.

Meanwhile, in the real world, does anyone give a monkey's? It seems unlikely. Most of the little old ladies who buy both the existing mags will doubtless continue to do so, writing into *Radio Times* occasionally to insist that Esther Rantzen is canonised. And the rest of us? We'll just look in the newspaper, as before...

'Old Couch Potato'

MEDIA NEWS

WHILE all eyes have been fixed on the Gulf another conflict, every bit as savage, has been underway at the BBC. When the war began, deputy director-general John Birt, the smug amateur scouser from LWT whose sole interest is wall-to-wall current affairs, invaded Radio 4's FM frequency (henceforward known at Broadcasting House as "Radio War"), declaring it to be the 19th province of his news empire.

After protests from David Hatch, managing director radio, agreement was reached that once Saddam withdrew from Kuwait, Birt would retreat from FM. As, indeed, he has.

But shortly after Radio War went on air, Paul Fox, managing director of BBC television, had announced his retirement. Birt, with an eye on the endgame worthy of Kasparov, made his move. Fox's old post went to his assistant Will Wyatt, leaving a space for Hatch, who was delighted to be a step nearer his ultimate goal of becoming director-general.

With Hatch out of the way, Birt let it be known that he *did* have long-term plans to annex the FM frequency permanently for current affairs, leaving Radio 4 in the absurd position of broadcasting its stereo dramas and music on poor-quality mono long wave.

This led Michael Green, controller of Radio 4, to threaten to resign. As Green is behind many of Radio 4's most dire productions, including the abysmal *Citizens*, Birt would be happy to accept his resignation if formally offered. He would then be free to complete his coup (he is already regrouping for another assault on FM if a June election is called) by installing two of his own grey men as Radio 4 controller and head of network radio.

Director-general Michael Checkland has not been consulted over any of this. His less-than-dynamic reign is expected to come to an end early in 1992.

THE latest sport at the BBC is bounty hunting. Department bosses are earning fat bonuses based on the number of staff they can get rid of.

A grand is on offer to managers for every employee they can find an excuse to fire, make redundant or persuade to take early retirement on disadvantageous financial terms. The bounty hunters are sworn to secrecy. When reference to the practice is unavoidable it is known as "performance-related pay".

SAD news at BSkyB. The banks have held up the £300 million loan to the ailing station and Alan Bond's Bond corporation is suing former BSB directors and companies for selling out to the Dirty Digger.

Murdoch is, however, determined to hang on. He has heroically cut coffee and taxi allowances at the *Sunset Times* branch of the empire.

WORLD OF HYPE

IN keeping with his huge ego, Robert Maxwell is determined that the forthcoming flotation of his *Mirror* Group should be a major public event, on a par with the Government's privatisations, no less.

With an admirably democratic spirit, Maxwell is very keen to sell shares to all the Trevors and Sharons who read his newspapers. He is not particularly enamoured of the big insurance companies and other institutions who have invested in ventures like *The Indescribablyboring*. Perhaps he fears that this lack of regard is mutual. In any event, the advertising campaign will be targeted at the small investor.

Three leading City PR firms were on the short list for the lucrative task of promoting the flotation. They were Grandfield Rork Collins, City Gate — and Dewe Rogerson, who have had a near-monopoly of promoting the Government's privatisations and have been responsible for most of the ludicrous excesses of those campaigns.

The interviews (as usual, only Maxwell spoke) were perfunctory. Few in the City were surprised when Dewe Rogerson won the contract.

THAT'S SHOWBIZ!

LONDON showbiz impresarios have been sent the following irresistible sales spiel by Chris Quinten, the burly ex-*Coronation Street* heart-throb, who is looking for a new agent to revive his career:

"Chris, is a man with ambition and willingness to work for his dreams; he is a man with the experience to back his desires to succeed. Stars are NOT BORN, they are beaten out of ordinary men and women like fine pewter is pounded into urns. With the hands of a craftsman, Chris has fashioned his gifts and abilities into a presentation that is both serviceable and sublime.

"In 1977, Chris began the forging of his watchword for this time period. Chris appeared in five television commercials over the next two years. He also appeared in guest spots on episodes of BBC-TV's *Warship* and *Mr Big*, ITV's detective series *Quatermass* starring Sir John Mills, and in the feature film *International Velvet* starring Tatum O'Neal.

"In November 1978, craftsman became alchemist and pewter became gold. Chris was cast as 'Brian Tilsley' in 'Granada' and TV's *Coronation Street* the world's longest running TV serial. In the ten years that followed, he taped eighty half-hour shows per year. This 1st rated soap aired twice a week in 26 countries, with an audience of 16 million per episode in the United Kingdom alone.

"On leave from *Coronation Street*, Chris polished the golden faces for experience and art with grease paint and theatrical pursuit. To this end, he completed a 13 week tour with the musical *Wizard of Oz*. He also performed in two highly acclaimed dramas, *A Nigh Must Fall* and *Entertaining Mr Sloane*.

"Transmuting ability to expressive art by means of discipline is definitely Chris' forte, and is evident in the sheer breadth of his accomplishments. Chris formed and toured the UK with a rock band, writing and recording his own songs. He was one of Britain's gymnastic champions and one of the youngest Black Belts in Karate. He still practices sports for enjoyment including skiing, tennis, soccer, golf and horseback riding."

Don't all rush at once.

HOLLYWOOD is turning its RayBan-shielded gaze in the direction of Northern Ireland: two film versions of the H-Block hunger strike are now being threatened, the first featuring *Robocop* star Rob Burns as Bobby Sands. This promising piece of casting has been spurned by relatives of the ten dead men, who back a rival film starring Sean Penn. The producer of this epic will be Mickey Rourke, star of the absurd IRA thriller *A Prayer For The Dying*.

According to the enterprising Belfast newspaper *Sunday Life* Rourke and Penn are likely to call upon the services of Martin Lynch, the Belfast writer responsible for turning Bob Hoskins into an ex-SAS man turned priest. Lynch was quoted as saying that he "would have no reservations about working with Rourke again. I got on very well with him and he stayed with my family while he was over here."

This is surprising. Two years ago when Rourke ran into trouble over his Fenian-sounding statements at the Cannes film festival, Lynch was anxious for hacks to appreciate the depth of Rourke's ignorance. At that time he claimed that the actor knew little about Northern Ireland, that he'd spent only two nights in the province staying at the salubrious Culloden Hotel near Stormont Castle, and during a brief drive past the Shankhill Road appeared to be unaware of the existence of Unionists. Obviously there must be some misunderstanding here.

Meanwhile Stella Stalker's hopes of selling the screen rights to the autobiography of hubby John, the famous ex-cop and window-blind consultant, seem to have been scuppered by Ken Loach's film *Hidden Agenda* which is uncannily reminiscent of the Stalker tale. Wisely in view of the amount of litigation provoked by the book, *Hidden Agenda's* producers have, however, listed the film as fiction, with the familiar "any resemblance to living persons is coincidental" clause buried in the credits. As well as depriving past and present police officers of another try at the libel lottery, it means no royalty payment for the Stalkers — and little chance of anyone buying the rights to the book, thus leaving John a fair bit poorer than he might have hoped. Back to the window-blinds...

"I understand the PM went absolutely grey with rage"

BEARDED balloonist and Virgin mogul Richard Branson is being accused of despoiling the countryside over his attempts at landscape gardening. Old 'Capability' Branson started building a lake and a crude steel bridge next to his farm at Kidlington, Oxfordshire, without bothering to apply for planning permission.

The bridge was described as "horrible" and "hideous" at a meeting of the local planning committee. "What I find rather sad," one councillor commented, "is that this chap started this business off without so much as consulting us." Other members criticised the track which connects the bridge to a nearby road. One described Branson's track as "the most appalling intrusion into the countryside" she had ever seen.

Branson, lest we forget, was the man chosen by Mrs Thatcher to beautify Britain through a strange organisation called UK 2000. Perhaps sensibly, he resigned from the job shortly after being appointed.

UN NEWS

WAS Michael Irwin, the United Nations director of health, insane? Certainly his colleagues at the World Bank thought so when he left the UN to join them.

He wrote a letter to the bank's internal magazine opposing the staff perk of first class airline travel. It was not as though he suggested going steerage — merely business class — but the staff created such an uproar one would have thought they'd been told to grab an oar.

Irwin is now back in Britain and has published a book, *Talpa* (which, *Eye* readers hardly need reminding, is Latin for "mole") in which he claims to have smuggled a pistol into the UN on various occasions in the 1980s with a view to blowing away President Reagan in the interests of world peace.

As UN medical director, he was frequently close to Hopalong before he mounted the rostrum at the general assembly, so he was in a good position to carry out such a mission. But, he says, he wrestled with his conscience and forbore.

Former UN colleagues are divided in their opinion. Some think it was a bit over the top to bring an illegally-acquired gun into the UN. Others will never forgive him for missing the opportunity.

All agree that it was indiscreet to write a book about it afterwards, even with the coy disclaimer that "it is for the reader to decide if the story is a combination of fact and fiction or the confession of a potential crime".

Time to celebrate — Michael Carr with his wife Georgina

Lancashire Evening Post

I-SKY / BSB

The Simpsons (Sky, 8pm) are the closest thing to a real TV family, *writes Jim Taylor.*

I know they are only cartoon creations but Bart and Homer are much more believable than the pap produced in almost all BBC and ITV sit-coms.

The Simpsons are slick, deadly accurate and the funniest cartoon series since The Flintstones.

The Sun

BUST your brains with our weekly quiz. There are no prizes — just the fun of pitting your wits against the News of the World.

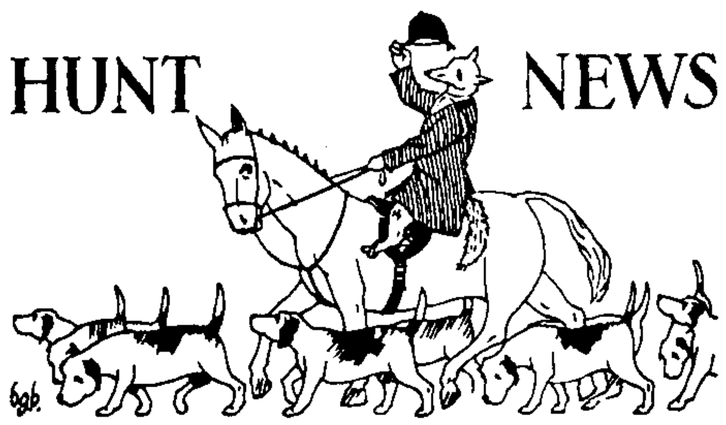
1. Who fought Britain in the war of 1812?
2. What is a mashie?...
7. On which satellites can you receive the main Sky telly channel?

News of the World

CONTRIBUTOR: Tom Hall, R. Sweeny.

An occasional column for which readers are invited to submit Sky-plugs masquerading as news items in Murdoch papers. The usual £10 will be paid.

HUNT NEWS



THE CHIDDINGFOLD, Leconfield and Cowdray Hunt has been in trouble again. Its kennel huntsman Stephen Thayne has just been convicted of assault for riding down a female hunt saboteur in March of last year. Thayne was given a one-year conditional discharge and ordered to pay £172 costs. The magistrate said that he accepted Thayne's argument that the assault had not been deliberate, but nonetheless found Thayne to have been reckless.

In another case Duncan Branch, a farmer who rides with the Hunt, was recently fined £100 for assaulting two hunt saboteurs during a meet last year. The sabs had been blowing a horn and calling the dogs in an effort to confuse the pack, when Branch rode at them. They hid behind a tree, but Branch dismounted and cropped one of the sabs, David Fowler, across the bridge of the nose.

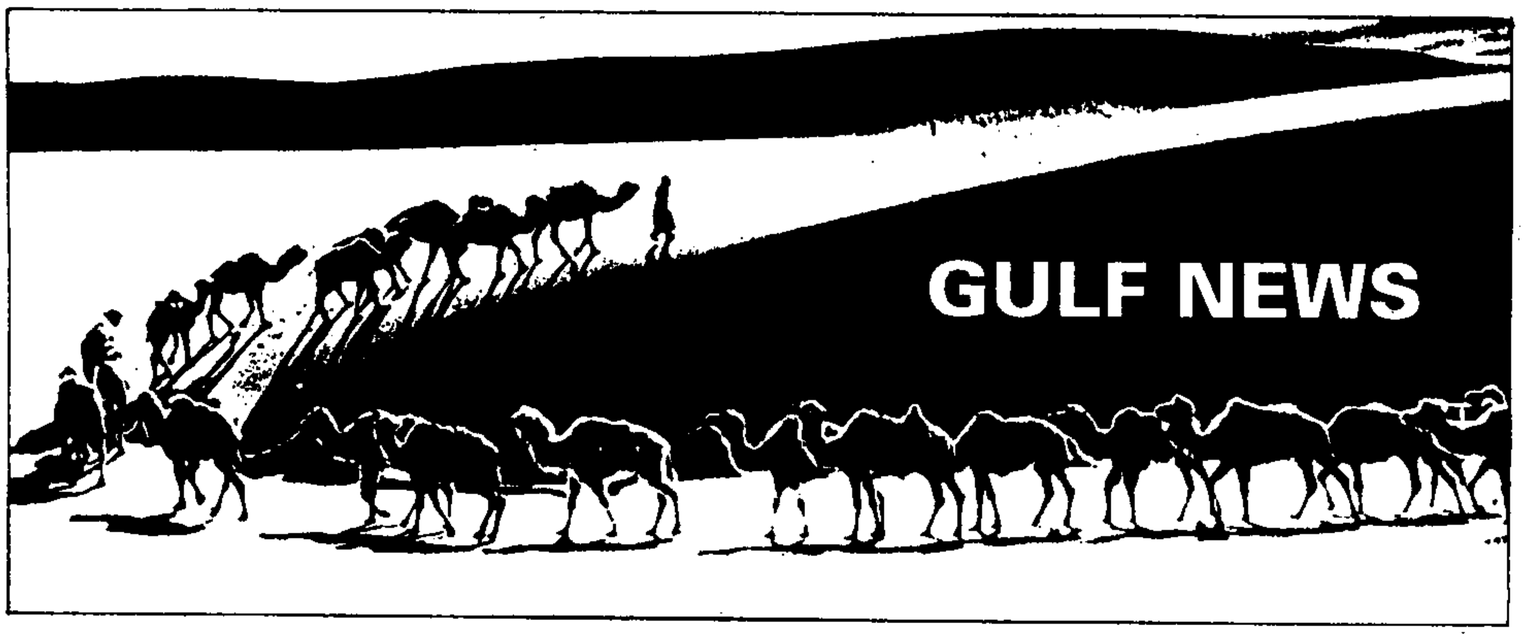
According to Fowler's evidence: "He had this riding crop in his hand and was waving it and said 'I'm an army man, I'm not afraid to fight.' He was showing his teeth and growling a bit and he looked just like a werewolf." When Fowler stumbled and fell while endeavouring to retreat, the other sab, Simon Bryant, tried to protect him, thus receiving two blows to the face from Branch.

Branch claimed he had acted in self-defence, but the magistrates at Petworth were not persuaded by his version of events and ordered him to pay each of his victims £50 as well as legal costs of £240.

Finally, three hunt supporters have been convicted and fined as a result of a car chase after a Chiddingfold meet last year. Justin Ellis, Matthew Jones and Charles Peach denied a prosecution claim that they had received instructions from the hunt to frighten off saboteurs.

However they could hardly deny that they had used their vehicle to ram a Land Rover containing a group of sabs, since a passenger in their car gave evidence for the prosecution. Guy Morey told the court: "We nudged into the back of the Land Rover several times, and three or four times we were actually pushing it as if to force it off the road."

Two of the accused were convicted of affray and fined £250 each plus costs, while the driver, Ellis, was fined £400 and banned from driving for a year.



TOP marks for disinformation during the Gulf War — a keenly fought contest — go to the BBC and Ministry of Defence for their coup over the pictures of the two captured Tornado pilots, Flt Lts John Peters and Adrian Nichol. The two were paraded on Iraqi television in a pathetic attempt by Saddam's secret service to demonstrate the success of Iraqi anti-aircraft defences. Neither said anything on screen which was specially useful to the Iraqi regime.

The way in which the BBC and the MoD used the film skilfully suggested that the two men had been tortured into saying what the secret police in Baghdad wanted them to say. The Press responded loyally, headed by the *Daily Star* which proclaimed: THE BASTARD IS TORTURING OUR BOYS. Blanket press coverage of the battered faces of the two pilots swung huge numbers of sceptical people behind the allies.

It was only after the war was over that Flt Lt Peters wife, Helen, disclosed that the film had been secretly edited by the BBC. A copy of the complete, unedited film had been handed to her by the BBC at the time, on condition she kept quiet about it. On the un-broadcast part of the tape, Peters sent his love to his wife and children, and told them not to worry about his bruises. They had, he said, been collected when he had ejected from his aircraft and landed head-first in the desert. (Such injuries are very common when pilots eject.)

"He was not so traumatised as we thought" says Mrs Peters. "He was answering questions logically and sensibly. He just didn't look like he'd been beaten."

Yet the Ministry (and the BBC), knowing the pilots had not been tortured, cheerfully told the media that they had been — and the media unanimously passed on the bad news.

WHEN the US military build up began last August, it was in so-called response to the alleged massing of Iraqi troops on the Kuwait/Saudi border. By September the Pentagon was claiming there were 250,000 Iraqi troops in Kuwait.

There was just one problem. A Florida newspaper, the *St Petersburg Times*, broke every rule of modern journalism. It *checked* the Pentagon's figures, by buying satellite photos from a Soviet commercial agency and asking experts to examine them. The pictures clearly showed the Desert Shield build up around Dharhan, but no signs of an Iraqi build up. They did show vehicle tracks in the sand near oil fields — but no signs of tank or other military movements.

Later the Pentagon claimed the Iraqi garrison in Kuwait reached over half a million men. But the most inflated counts of prisoners and bodies — even including the massive operation in Southern Iraq itself — did not produce a quarter of that in prisoners or casualties.

Not for the first time, the Pentagon and Saddam Hussein had a cynical collusion of interests. Just as both underplayed civilian casualties of the bombing, they both had reasons to hype the strength and capabilities of the Iraqi army. Some US generals are now crowing about the success of their disinformation campaign, which obviously didn't fool the Iraqis — but did help build up war fever back home.

A SUBSCRIBER has been informed by the ministry of information and culture in the United Arab Emirates that *Private Eye* is "not allowed to enter the UAE". His copy has been returned to this country.

Any readers who feel that they might want to air their views on the Gulf war, freedom of information, democracy, etc, are requested not to plague the UAE Ministry of Information and Culture, PO Box 17, Abu Dhabi. Telephone: 010-971-2-463100; telex 22283 EM.

WHEN Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir met George Bush in December, according to the Paris-based *Intelligence Newsletter*, he took with him a dossier purporting to contain proof of Bush's involvement in the Irangate scandal.

This tactless gesture appears to have consolidated Bush's exasperation with Shamir's mulishness on the Palestinian issue; shortly afterwards the Israeli Ambassador to the US was given an unprecedented public dressing down.

Now, with his popularity boosted by the war and surrounded by the uncritical admiration of the American media, Bush does not have to worry about an issue as dead as Irangate. But Shamir does have a lot to worry about.

Bush's speech last week pledging support for UN resolutions on the Arab-Israeli conflict does not augur well for the ex-terrorist Israeli premier and his continuing refusal to countenance any concessions.

CULT CORNER

HOW DO cults beat the recession? By moving into the lucrative area of management and corporate training. And one of the latest groups to enter the market is Harley Young Associates of Henley-on-Thames.

Under the guidance of managing director and former actor Philip Hynd, HYA is offering five-day training and communication courses to blue chip companies for £1,800 per person plus the cost of the venue — and all this excluding VAT. For this the company promises to provide customers with a programme aimed at improving the "interpersonal" skills of their workforce.

Mr Hynd may be better remembered as a trainer by those who have taken and survived similar courses organised by the Programmes group of companies which has been repeatedly linked with the controversial Exegesis cult (see *Eyes passim*).

Harley Young's brochure contains the usual managerial psycho-speak. "When you are being true to yourself you have an authenticity which is your greatest source for getting what you want. Participation in the Communication Seminar and the integration of its benefits is about staking your claim and owning every aspect of yourself. Given half a chance you'd want that, wouldn't you?"

Hynd, who once played in an episode of *Bergerac*, is said to have worked for a leading communications company — Programmes — and to have trained extensively in "transformational psychology". One of his associates, Anni Nicholls, an honours psychology graduate, is said to have studied "neuro linguistic programming", "change technology" and "organisational engineering".

Could this be cult speak for the practice of brainwashing and hurling verbal abuse at hapless punters, for which the Exegesis movement gained an unenviable reputation?

Anni Nicholls and Hynd are close friends of the American transformational speaker Ron Smotherton and have taken his Spiritual Basis of Relationship Training Courses which are organised by Anni's sister, Jan Harley. Those unfamiliar with the Exegesis movement should be aware that psychiatrists have described its courses as being like "drug dependency" and of "inducing very great changes in people because of the stress involved".

Church News

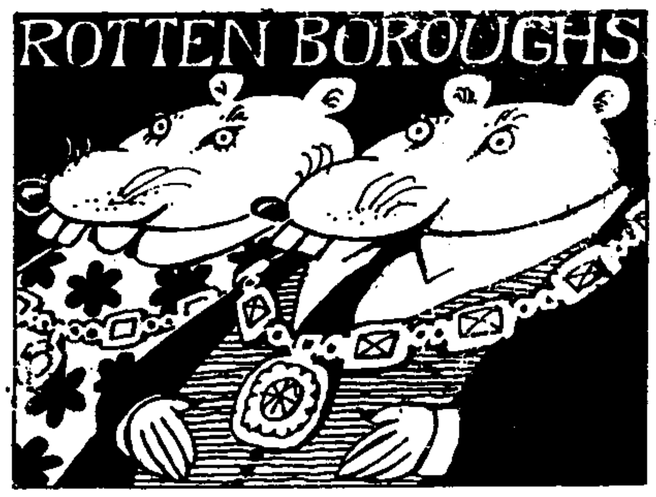
A STUDENT counsellor from the University of East Anglia has been appointed as "conciliator" in the acrimonious row (*Eye* 759) between the dean of Lincoln and his four residentiary canons. The squabbling clerics spent a whole Saturday "talking through" their problems with this hapless healer.

But it will take a miracle to bring peace to the strife-torn diocese. At the last meeting of the greater chapter, on 28 January, many members arrived in a white heat of outrage at the *Eye*'s revelation that the dean, Brandon "Brandy" Jackson, had been persecuting his sub-dean, Rex Davis, at a time when Davis's daughter was dying of cancer. They thought his conduct was a touch callous for a man of God. A motion supporting the Dean's call for Davis's resignation was heavily defeated.

The dean's hostility is reciprocated. A statement issued by Davis to the chapter said he was "flabbergasted" by Jackson's "offensive" behaviour. He accused the dean of signing a statement to the police, asking them to investigate Davis.

"At chapter meetings in November and December, the dean denied any particular knowledge of this, other than that he had been interviewed by the police," he revealed. "At the chapter of 8 January 1991 I asked the dean specifically as to his involvement. In reply to a formal question, the dean's action on 13 November 1990 [i.e. calling in the police] was confirmed."

Poor old Inspector Knacker, according to a cathedral source, is "out of his depth" with regard to this one. Who can blame him?



BELFAST

THE hapless residents of the Belfast suburb of Castlereagh are once again being sorely tried by the antics of their elected representatives. Castlereagh Borough Council (*Eyes passim*) has decided to hold a referendum on upholding the Sabbath.

At a cost to ratepayers (Ulster having been spared the poll tax) of up to £30,000, the 48,000-strong electorate is being asked to support closing all leisure facilities, sports grounds and other entertainment venues on Sundays.

While shops tend to open with impunity, Loyalist councillors have long attempted to curb less profitable ventures on Sundays. In parts of the province, workmen are sent out on Saturday evenings to immobilise roundabouts and tie up swings in an effort to prevent children indulging sinful tendencies on the Lord's Day. This sort of thing was thought to be dying out, but it seems there are still votes to be gained through self-righteousness.

Behind Castlereagh's attempt to close its Government grant-aided leisure facilities lies a long-standing struggle for control of the council. The two unionist parties, the OUP and DUP, vie for the balance of power, aided by their respective MPs, councillors John Taylor and Peter Robinson. The call for a referendum came initially from the more zealous elements of the DUP. Rival unionists were reluctant to be seen as any less fanatical. Despite most councillors privately opposing Sunday closure, polling day has been set for April 4.

A pathetically low turn-out is confidently predicted — giving the fundamentalists a reasonable chance of success. The poll is legal under old Stormont legislation. Much more of this sort of thing is likely to drive the Northern Ireland Office into abolishing local councils altogether.

campain

An occasional column of dismal advertising

The Liberation of Kuwait

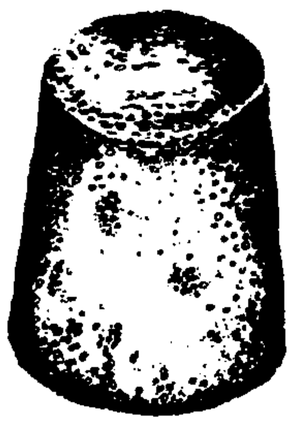
A TRIBUTE TO THOSE WHO SERVED

The cause of freedom, and the vanquishing of dictatorship from Kuwait, has been bravely, efficiently and skilfully served by the Allied Forces in Operation Desert Storm. In recognition of their achievements in restoring liberty to the people of Kuwait these important commemorative pieces have been handcrafted in Britain. They are exclusive to the Thimble Guild and are not available in any shop or store.

GULF SAND

Sand from the Gulf has been flown here and used to craft this unique commemorative piece. The very sand our soldiers and their allies were fighting over. £10.95.

In offering them with gratitude and pride in the skills, courage and sacrifice of British and Allied forces, we will donate £1 from each order to the Gulf Fund. Naturally each piece comes to you with a certificate of authenticity.



THIMBLE GUILD ADVERTISEMENT

HARROGATE

AFTER the infamous Harrogate conference centre scandal (*Eyes passim*), citizens of the genteel Yorkshire spa hoped that their councillors had learned an expensive lesson.

Alas, they have discovered that the council's contract services division — set up to compete with private companies for refuse collection and other contracts — has lost a sum not unadjacent to £1 million. The latest debacle has used up all the council's reserves and will inevitably lead to an increase in poll tax.

Council finance supremo Ron Woolley has personally apologised for reporting last September that the division had made an £80,000 profit in 1989-90. Now the accounts have been officially audited, this "profit" has been revealed as a £630,000 loss. Estimates of current year's loss range from £250,000 to £400,000.

The losses, which straddle the last year of Tory rule and the first year of Liberal control, have already led to 16 redundancies. Council leaders have promised an investigation to find those responsible. They hope tough action will dissuade environment secretary Michael Heseltine from closing down the division altogether — though few poll tax payers would be likely to complain if Tarzan did swing into action.

Meanwhile, the council has written to former contract services manager Keith Bedford in connection with a £6,000 "performance related" award he received last year — which was calculated on the mythical £80,000 profit. Mr Bedford, who took early retirement on health grounds, has yet to reply.

BROMLEY

THE GLOVES are off in the continuing battle to control Bromley borough council's newly-privatised social services.

The staunchly Thatcherite authority has already incurred losses of £400,000 from handing its old people's and children's homes to private firms (*Eyes*, passim) despite claims that the transfer would save money and increase efficiency.

A letter penned by Alex Hancock, chair of the Bromley branch of the care group, NAYPIC, to the management of one of the new firms, Kindercare, scotches any chance of an early ceasefire.

Instead of welcoming his new guardians, Hancock's letter says: "I am writing to express my disgust at your recent infantile display of foul-mouthed abuse. I strongly object to being referred to as a dipshit... and as for you saying 'I'm going to rip your bollocks off', I find this statement very threatening. I would like a full explanation and a written apology."

Meanwhile, the council's opposition Labour and Liberal Democrat councillors have asked Inspector Knacker to investigate whether aspects of the privatisation broke the local government act. Labour MP Jeff Rooker has also tabled a Commons motion calling on auditors to check the financial losses involved.

TAMESIDE

OLD FOLK in grimy Tameside, east Manchester, are wondering what has happened to £10,000 left to residents of two homes by a former inmate.

The bequest was made to homes in Dukinfield in 1987 to pay for residents' outings. Alas, it is rumoured that the money has been moved, Scargill-fashion, from account to account — leaving the disgruntled geriatrics no nearer Blackpool's golden mile.

This is an unusual lapse by the hyper-efficient Tameside social services team. Two years ago the council subverted government privatisation plans by handing over services to a shadowy off-the-shelf company, Tameside Enterprises Ltd (main shareholder, Tameside council).

The council knew the "privatisation" was a sham. Social services director Mike Leadbetter told staff: "It would be unfortunate to say the least if the DSS or indeed the Government was given prior notice to scrutinise the arrangements in detail before they were put into effect." The Government did not cotton on, and actually paid TEL to take over.

TEL is led by one Paul Stonier, former power-broker with the public employees' union, Nupe. By a remarkable coincidence the council's social services committee is chaired by Shirley Stonier, Paul's wife.

Mrs Stonier swept to national prominence two years ago when she threatened to take into council care the unborn baby of local couple Philip and Lily Reyner, whose three previous children had died in infancy. The Reyners are now consulting Messrs Sue, Grabbit and Runne, to find out whether they have been libelled by Shirley Stonier or Tameside council.

MANCHESTER

COUNCILLORS in litter-strewn Manchester have come up with an original, if useless, method of wasting their poll-tax payers' money. They are to spend more than £4 million in the next financial year paying workers they've already laid off to do jobs that no longer exist!

This involves axing some 400 posts (including 134 in the massive-spending education department). The council is to pay the workers for sitting at home all day while trying to convince them they will be redeployed.

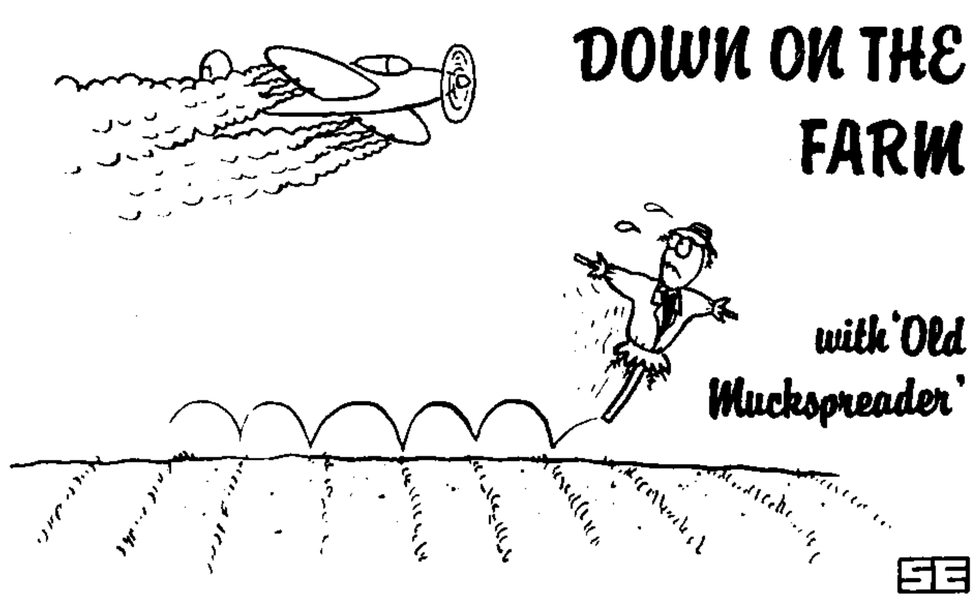
The hare-brained scheme is a hangover from the days when Spartish ideas dominated Manchester town hall. Recently councillors have sought respectability by working closely with the private sector on "wealth-generating" schemes and implementing £40 million worth of cuts. Yet they are obsessed with avoiding compulsory redundancies, as if still determined to turn Manchester into another Murkyside, with the entire population in the council's employ.

Among the major casualties of the ghost-workers scheme is the city's public relations supremo, Ann Lewis, who is paid £25,000 a year for attending a polytechnic course two days a week. Sixty further education lecturers have not got off so lightly — most of them are now driving council minibuses on lecturers' wages.

Even more worrying is the plight of 22 workers at the city abattoir. Some wags have suggested they be transferred to the treasurers' department to help make council cuts.

None of the poll tax unit are being paid to stay at home, but the council has still managed to cock up its poll tax arrangements. It has announced that next year's charge will be £431, a rise of only £6 on last year — surprisingly low for a Labour council.

In fact, a year ago council leader Graham Stringer was claiming that £171 of the city's first poll tax charge was a *one-off* administrative cost. It has also slipped his memory that since Manchester contributed £70 to the safety net last year, poll-tax payers should not have to pay again this time around.



DOWN ON THE FARM

with 'Old Muckspreader'

"IMAGINE you are locked in a train carriage for 36 hours. You have nothing to eat and nothing to drink. Before long you'll be suffering from exhaustion.

"Now imagine the train is travelling at 100 mph, but there is nowhere to sit and nothing to hang onto. You'll be thrown about, cornered and trampled. If you are frail or weak you might not survive.

"Now imagine there are 600 people crammed in there with you. That is five times worse than the worst rush-hour crowd.

"Aren't you glad you're not a lamb being transported to Europe?"

This campaigning piece of ad copy by lobbyists opposed to Euro-cruelty is unlikely to have much effect. The lamb lovers' campaign is bound to fail, as they are up against M. Delors' bureaucracy and the greed of British farmers, but it is a brave effort.

John Selwyn Gummer, the devout C of E minister of agriculture, says that "1992 and all that" is all about improving standards. But, in the face of all that bureaucracy and greed, he is unlikely to act to stop the lambs' last cruel journey to slaughter.

THE Economic Forestry Group is a familiar tax-dodging vehicle for the environmentally-insensitive rich. For years it has been blanketing the landscape of upland Britain with millions of unsuitable conifers. With the abolition of tax breaks for conifer planting, EFG has seen its business alter rapidly.

It is good to see these accountants say they reckon there is more profit in garden centres and nursery beds than in allowing John Major's plutocrats to escape their tax contributions.

MEANWHILE, the Countryside Commission entertains hopes of overtaking the Forestry Commission as a planter of trees. It has a clever idea. Broadleaved trees are attractive and natural to most of Britain. Their presence enhances property values, encourages wildlife, needs no subsidies and gives universal pleasure. No wonder the Treasury is determined to stop the department of the environment advancing its plans for national forests.

Far better to subsidise the Forestry Commission to destroy our hillsides at enormous cost than permit beautiful woodlands to flourish.

A good sample of Forestry Commission mendacity is the sale of a forlorn little ruined castle in its Glentress forest to a Yorkshire property developer. It was only when the plans to convert Caerdronnach Tower to an executive home failed the aesthetic tests of even the sleepy councillors of Tweeddale that the Commission realised it was fumbling again. It says something about the imagination of the commission that it could think a medieval pile could only be put to use as a visitors' toilet facility or a bungalow.

THE BITTER winter dampened the newspapers' global warming hysteria temporarily, but the blazing oilfields of Kuwait have given fresh encouragement to the atmospheric doom merchants.

Research by the George C. Marshall Institute of Washington DC indicates what dud science the global warming industry is built upon.

Contrary to the daft computer models used by all the scare-vendors, the northern hemisphere has not warmed more than the southern hemisphere; high latitudes have not warmed more than low latitudes and the US land mass has shown no warming trend... nor has Europe.

What the institute omits from its calculations is the psychological hunger on the Left for capitalist bogeys — and the prospect of all the jobs for guardians against a non-existent problem. Global warming is as substantive as ritual child abuse on Orkney — it doesn't happen, but plenty of salaries are sustained by the pretence that it does.

BRUSSELS SPROUTS

OUR glorious Euroservants have been shovelling out the cash again — in some cases with reckless abandon.

According to the annual report of the European court of auditors, seven million ecus — around £4 million — in "vital economic aid" was given by the European Development Fund (EDF) to the west African state of Benin. Just who the cash has been helping, though, is far from clear.

The money was to be paid to the government of Benin and its expenditure supervised by the European Commission's delegate on the spot. For convenience, an account was opened in the state bank of Benin, the Banque Commerciale de Benin (BCB), from which the money could only be drawn by the joint signatures of a Benin government representative (the national authorising officer), and the commission delegate.

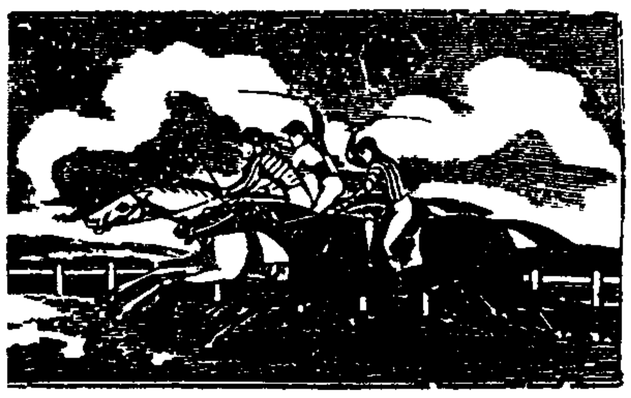
The money was duly paid into the account in August 1988, but when the commission delegate looked for it in late January 1989, he found that it had been transferred out of the account almost immediately after it had gone in — with no double signatures needed.

A shocked Euroservant asked the national authorising officer for an explanation and some days later was told that the account now showed a credit balance of 6.857 million ECU — about £80,000 short of the original sum — with no explanation for the shrinkage.

But that was not the end of the story. The authorising officer said that although the account appeared to be in credit, the bank had been insolvent for some considerable time, which meant that the Eurocash had gone — and no one knew where. And it was not possible to transfer the imaginary money out of the insolvent BCB to the Banque Centrale des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (BCEAO).

As a solution, the EC agreed to assign the imaginary credit in the BCB to cancel the debts due by certain of Benin's state-owned companies to the BCB! Thus the EC cash which had already gone, was officially to be spent in its new imaginary form to cancel a debt owed by national companies to the national bank — in other words by the government to itself.

The court of auditors, while censuring this absurd process in which £4 million went missing, concluded its long investigation saying: "Until the funds are deposited with a solvent financial establishment, the real contribution to the Benin economy of the 7 million ECU must be considered to be doubtful or even non-existent."



Sporting Life

THE defeat of suave sophisticate Jeremy Hindley by plain Peter "Cherry" Cundell in the election for the chairmanship of the national trainers federation is being portrayed in some quarters as a triumph for the decent little men of jump racing over the hard, swanky flat brigade from Newmarket Heath.

This view owes something to the popular misconception that the national hunt fraternity are all kinder, friendlier and more approachable than their counterparts on the level. Try telling that to any hack who has ever tried to get a friendly post-race interview out of the Princess Royal's thick-necked companion, David "Duke" Nicholson, a man who wears his charmlessness with pride.

But to the true believers in the shires the likes of the Duke and Cherry have the right stuff, whereas Hindley is guilty of the capital crime of not really being that interested in steeplechasing. At least, not outside a couple of agreeable lunch parties at Cheltenham and Liverpool each year. Even his closest friends found it hard to see how his belated manifesto commitment to making regular winter mid-week visits to the provincial gaffs could be reconciled with his annual January and February trips to the ski slopes and the Caribbean.

Cundell, by contrast, has vowed to give his new position his full attention. It shouldn't be too hard, as he has hardly been over-subscribed with horses lately. You have to flick through an awful lot of form books to find his last big race winner. Were it not for his recent elevation, he might soon have become another of those brave, struggling, etc, little men being forced out of the game altogether.

Cherry has promised the NTF that he will fight the cause of hard-pressed trainers who face bankruptcy as a result of too few owners and bookies taking too much out of the sport. But then, perhaps some of these supposedly tragic cases are being pushed out of business sinply because they're not very good.

To lose the likes of the inimitable Rod Simpson would indeed be a disaster, but can anyone really say that the turf is the poorer for the loss of Captain Mark Smyly? Would it miss Peter Cundell, for that matter?

Cherry's fortunes should look up a bit now that the BBC are paying him for the use of his Compton stables to film their new *Howard's Way*-style soap opera, *Trainer*. This dire-sounding effort is to feature former *Man From UNCLE* David McCallum and a lot of chaps with short hair and jodhpurs staring meaningfully at the gallops and trying to bonk whoever the producers can afford to cast as the obligatory home counties bit of stuff.

But why on earth are they filming at Cundell's? Why not an authentic high-rolling, fast-bonking Newmarket yard — maybe one run by a friend of Jeremy Hindley's?

Because Cherry just happens to be an old school chum of the august controller of BBC-1, Jonathan Powell.

'Major Bonkers'

Letters

Searchlight

Sir,

I was astonished to see in your issue no.762 a totally inaccurate letter attacking myself and my publication, Searchlight magazine, which is held in high esteem internationally for its integrity, from Michael Sherman of Western Goals, a right-wing fringe group. The only previous publication of these lies has been in journals of the National Front, British National Party and various other crank neo-nazi groups.

I was particularly hurt because of my long association with Private Eye, which goes back to its very earliest days. Who more than you should have known that the claims in the letter are untrue?

1) I have no conviction for burglary.

2) I did not cost the BBC a brass farthing and was not enjoined in the action against them resulting from the Panorama programme "Maggie's Militant Tendency". In fact I was retained by the BBC's lawyers for a considerable period after the programme and Searchlight has carried out a large amount of other research work for the BBC since the court case. Clearly the BBC are not suicidal enough to go on employing the services of somebody who your correspondent alleges cost them half a million pounds.

3) But worst of all is the attack on a dead man. The reason why Harry Bidney's obituary in Searchlight contained no reference to sex crimes against young men is because he had no such convictions. Again your correspondent relies on the filth churned out by the neo-nazi hate machine rather than the truth. I hope that this letter will put an end to these baseless nazi allegations that have been around for several years.

Yours sincerely,
GERRY GABLE,

Editor and Publisher, Searchlight Magazine, London W1.

● *The views expressed in letters to the Editor do* **not** *reflect those of the magazine. This was particularly true in the case of Mr Sherman's letter and we obviously accept all Mr Gable's corrections to it and are sorry that he thought it was endorsed by the Eye.*

Folk hero

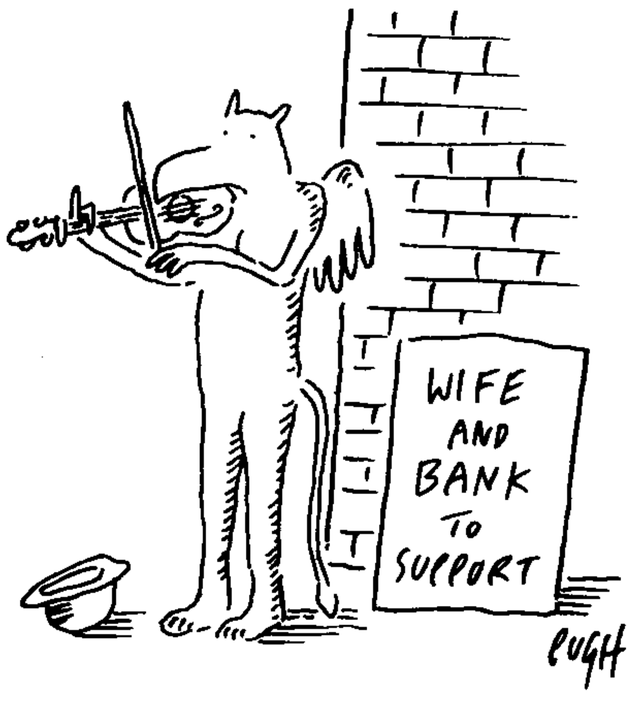
Sir,

I'm just about sick to death of your relentless sneering campaign against Paul Johnson. He is an outstanding journalist who articulates the feelings of millions of ordinary folk like myself. So pack it in.

Yours sincerely,
TOBY SCULTHORP,

London, W12.

(No. Ed)



Nunntheless

Sir,

O'Booze's comments on the Sunday Times's story about Trevor Nunn (Eye 762) are piffle. We have not recently published a "grovelling apology" to the former Royal Shakespeare Company supremo. Nunn withdrew from his libel action sans damages, sans costs, and we agreed to publish a clarification of three points.

One concerned a mistake by Nunn's own accountants, which we had already "clarified" on a previous occasion. One pointed out that Terry Hands used to be Nunn's deputy and took over the RSC in Nunn's many absences. The third concerned the money made by Nunn and the RSC from Les Miserables. This clarification, if anything, backed up the allegations made in our original article.

These points apart, we reiterated that we stood by what we had published, including the assertion that Nunn's absences from the RSC "significantly contributed to a malaise in the company's management".

O'Booze is also scurrilous about Rowena Webster's position in the intricate hierarchial structure of the Sunday Times when we jointly did this investigation. She was not, and was never, my "editor", and nor, incidentally, was Nunn ever at the National Theatre.

PETER HOUNAM,

The Sunday Times.

Vicious crop circle

Sir,

Re: "Hunt News", Eye 762

It does appear your reporter falls for everything the saboteurs say. After ridiculing defence witnesses for selective memory loss, your reporter then tells us that a rider smashed the back window of a van with a crop. Has your reporter ever seen a riding crop? I seriously doubt if Arnold Schwarzenegger could break a toughened-glass van window with a riding crop.

During the period between Eyes 761 and 762 appearing, a far more interesting story unfolded in Cheshire. A saboteur FELL off the top of a hound trailer as it was making its way to a hare hunt. Sadly, he died from his injuries. The saboteurs' organisation, with the logic of an Iraqi President, blamed the hunt, attacked the kennels some time later and most of the protestors (from Wolverhampton, not in Cheshire) wound up remanded in custody. (See the "Express and Star" from Wolverhampton for names, dates, etc.)

I have little interest in hunting, but I detest the hunt saboteurs who are arrogant enough to speak for foxes and who patently know nothing of the countryside.

I do respect the Eye's balanced but incisive views on the people who think they own this country. The Hunt News column does not belong in your otherwise excellent magazine.

Yours faithfully,
MR D. SOUTER,

Rugeley, Staffs.

BTR pill

Sir,

Re: Sally Deedes' piece 18.1.91

You probably publish only the news that's 'print to fit'. For your file at least, I enclose a list of charitable donations made by BTR in 1990. The pattern was similar in 1989. (Over 70 charities given donations by BTR — Ed.)

No apologies expected but a donation from Sally Deedes to the Sally Ally would be much appreciated by them.

Yours faithfully,
OWEN GREEN,

BTR Plc.

Tizwaz

Sir,

Is it true that if Tariq Aziz steps out of line he'll become Tariq Azwaz? I think we should be told.

KEN LEWINGTON,

London, SE19.

Dalai-ted

Sir,

I loved my interview with the Dalai Lama but you simply must correct your whopping lie that I told an actress at the What the Papers Say awards that I would get her sacked. We had a perfectly friendly conversation. I was so delighted to win the Award they could have made me sound like Donald Sinden if they wanted.

Yours sincerely,
LYNN BARBER,

The Independent On Sunday.

A nip in the square

Sir,

Piloti's incipient racism and reluctance to research detail have led him astray again. To describe Natsume Soseki as "deeply obscure" (Eye 762) may accurately reflect the woeful state of ignorance that the British persist in with regard to one of the world's major cultures, but it is hardly appropriate given that Soseki's name in Japan carries the same kind of weight as Dickens does in this country.

But he may well be right about the statue itself: after all it is far more important to have that extra square yard of grass for doggies to crap on than to risk exposing their owners to some history, or even — horror of horrors — non-British culture...

Yours etc,
SIMON PRENTIS,

London, NW6.

Star Charing Crossed

Sir,

What's up with "Piloti" then; is he foreign or something? Or can your organ just not afford a proper art critic? Anyone who thinks Charles I on his notoriously stuffed barrel-shaped horse at the top of Whitehall is "lively, subtly modelled, a single grand conception; monumental, magnificent, sophisticated and civic" — is either being paid by the word, or visually disadvantaged, or both. Or is he just fascinated by any erection not matter how slight?

Maybe so, since he goes on to rubbish the cerebral and award-winning Star, by one of our leading sculptors Paul Neagu. This will soon stand not "next to St Martins in the Fields" but opposite Charing Cross; and I hope your grotty Piloti has to go that way to work every day.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN NANDRIS,

London, N19.

Science fiction

Sir,

'Square Eyes' is entirely correct. QED has about as much right to be called a 'science programme' as Omni magazine has to be called a scientific journal. Both of them pander to the "Ripley's Believe It Or Not" community, and do enormous damage to the correct perception of scientific endeavour. The programme about homeopathy was typical. Were we supposed to believe that a ludicrous theory is finally (NB: it pre-dates 'conservation of energy', 'relativity', 'quantum mechanics' and 'the germ theory of disease') about to be accepted on the basis of a few dubious experiments performed by vets? Even the apparently straightforward programme about flight was fallacious. The explanation given was the one which is found in elementary text-books, and on the lips of lazy teachers. Unfortunately, although seductively simple, it is known to be wrong. Finally, we had the 'IQ Pill' programme in which the once-great Linus Pauling and the 'wanted to be great' Hans Eysenck creaked into town with their snake-oil medicine show. Come off it, Filkin, stop turning science into a sideshow!

Yours faithfully,
(DR) DAVID J. FISHER,

Cardiff.

I-SPY *Hong Kong Airport*

HALF PRICE

Buy One British Girl And Get One British Boy At Half Price.

LIMITED STOCK ONLY

Submitted by Drummond Miles. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Pax

Sir,

In a famous scene from the Bayeux tapestry Bishop Odo of Bayeux helps to stiffen Norman resolve, riding amongst his followers wielding a club. The Latin text reads "Odo episcopus tenens baculum confortat pueros", freely translated in a modernised version as, "wielding a club, Bishop Odo supports our boys". Is this the first use of that repellent phrase, now universally adopted by a slavering British press? If so, may we expect the politicians and the bishops to follow the practice of their medieval predecessors, and join in the war themselves?

Life has certainly got riskier for the common soldier since their masters ceased having to risk their own skins, other than by standing in the cold in Whitehall on a November morning. A few dead and maimed politicians might have a surprisingly restorative effect on the reputation of diplomacy... And as a poll tax exile I'd be happy to foot the bill for a few clubs with which to encourage them into the desert.

Yours etc,
PHILIP MORGAN,

Boulder, Colorado.

Och Eye!

Sir,

Being a Scotsman living in London has many disadvantages, but one of the most unendurable is the propensity of seemingly everyone to break into bad Russ Abbot impersonations upon hearing the merest trace of a Scottish accent.

Such offensive behaviour is therefore only reinforced by sarcastic little digs like the one you had at the expense of the ex-editor of Le Piss-Pauvre (Eye 762). Is his accent really relevant to the thrust of your story?

Yours faithfully,
PETER CLARK,

London, N3.

PS. This letter in no way admits that there is such a thing as a good Russ Abbot impersonation.

Sub missive

Sir,

Peter Tallon is absolutely right in saying that we subscribe to the Eye because it is "tasteless and offensive". I am, therefore, writing to complain in the strongest possible terms that there was nothing remotely tasteless or offensive in your last issue; and you will not be surprised to learn that I am cancelling my subscription.

Yours,
I. NEWT (Mrs),

London, SW11.

Gulfballs

£10 paid for contributions

"It was unexpected because it happened at a time when we didn't think it would."
BRITISH COMMANDER IN GULF
(Richard Hopkins)

"This is an unprecedented incident but we do know it has happened before."
BRIG-GEN PAT FOOTE, Radio 4
(Christopher Whitehouse)

Simon Bates: *So what do you do?*
Soldier: *I'm an electrician.*
Simon Bates: *So what's that in layman's terms?*
Radio 1
(Colin MacIntosh)

"And today will go down in history as January 17 1991."
Classic Gold Radio (Pennine)
(A. Makin)

"A bogus sham!"
JOHN MAJOR on Iraqi offer to withdraw
(A.A.E. Taylor)

"The pilots described it as a turkey shoot because the Iraqis were sitting ducks."
NEWS PRESENTER, GLR
(Ian Drury)

"I'm not saying that the Ministry of Defence in London does not have the whole picture of what is going on, but they only have a partial one."
SIR DAVID STEEL, Radio 4
(Ian Harris)

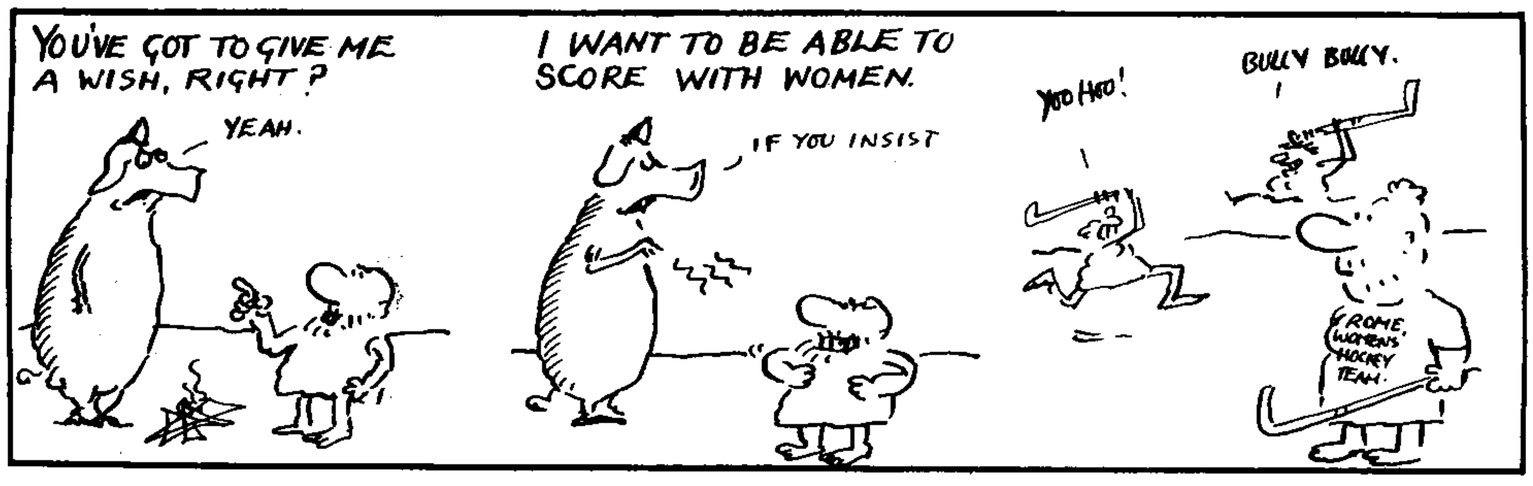
"This is not a news blackout, I just can't tell you anything."
AIR FORCE SPOKESMAN, Times
(William McCulloch)

"That was a strategic target, which I prefer to call a strategic target."
VICE ADMIRAL LAUTENBACHER, BBC1
(Steve Masters)

"We seem to have unleashed a hornets' nest."
VALERIE SINGLETON (interview with Geoffrey Howe), Radio 4
(Lord Gnome)

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN


YOU'VE GOT TO GIVE ME A WISH, RIGHT?
YEAH.
I WANT TO BE ABLE TO SCORE WITH WOMEN.
IF YOU INSIST
YOO HOO!
BULLY BULLY.
ROME WOMENS HOCKEY TEAM

Letter From India

from Our Own Correspondent

THERE IS no issue, however petty, that Rajiv Gandhi will not exploit in his desperation to become India's prime minister once again.

The latest political crisis to hit the world's largest democracy, ending with the resignation on 6 March of Chandra Shekhar's 117-day government, was precipitated by two out-of-town plainclothes policemen mooching around outside Gandhi's house.

The pair were seized by Gandhi's security goons and accused of illegally snooping on him and the nearby Congress Party headquarters. Two days later, Gandhi's Congress, senior coalition partner of Shekhar's Janata Dal since November, boycotted parliament, peevishly demanding an official inquiry into the "scandal".

It is widely believed in political circles that the charade was engineered by the domestic Intelligence Bureau on the Congress Party's behalf.

The Congress withdrawal from the Lok Sabha (lower house of parliament) was really aimed at wrecking the government's interim budget. If it had not been approved, the government would have found itself unable after 31 March to spend any money, including paying the salaries of India's legions of civil servants. But opposition parties stymied Congress machinations by agreeing to vote in favour of the budget — ostensibly in the "national interest" but actually to spite Rajiv.

After the resignation of former prime minister V.P. Singh last November, Gandhi pledged Shekhar's minority government the support of his 211 MPs for a year. At the time all parties were loath to go to the polls, as they feared the reaction of a cynical public.

Recently, however, prompted by fawning courtiers and a favourable opinion poll, Gandhi became impatient to regain the office he feels is his by right. Ever since his party was voted out in November 1989 for being corrupt and nepotistic, Gandhi has continued to be called "PM" by toadying party members and many senior bureaucrats.

Gandhi constantly schemed to win over the 56 MPs he needed to give him a majority. And, to keep the heat on Shekhar and control of the government in all but name, he heaped humiliations upon the PM.

Shekhar was forced to dismiss elected state governments in both Assam and Tamil Nadu, imposing federal rule. Gandhi coerced Shekhar into banning the refuelling of US military transport aircraft during the Gulf war and forced him to present the interim budget, postponing the actual one until May — by which time he hoped to be back in power.

In keeping with his self-image as an international statesman, Gandhi undertook a one-man peace initiative in the Gulf war. The war, in fact, ended the day the great statesman pitched up in in Tehran, but his toadies gave him a hero's welcome home anyway.

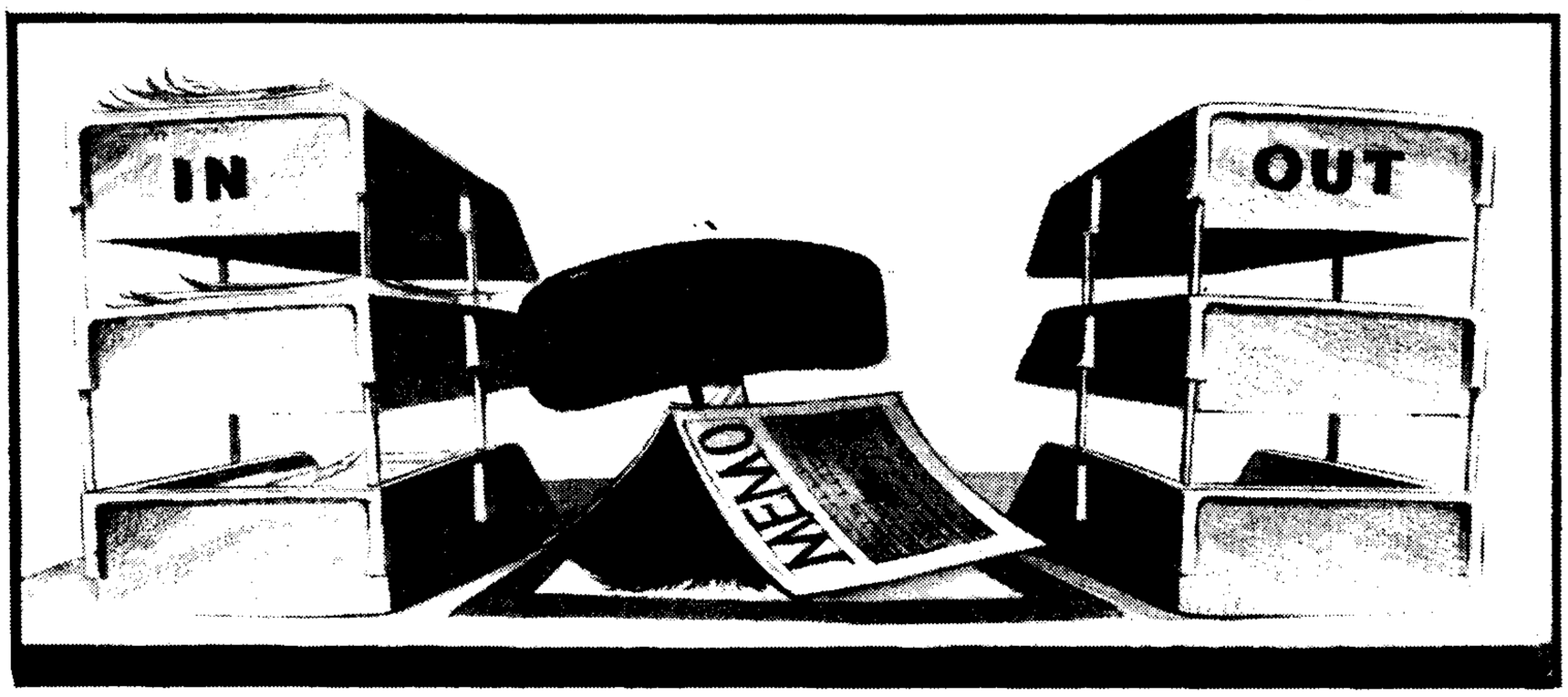
Shekhar's mocking of Gandhi's clowning on the global stage infuriated Rajiv, prompting him to bring down the government. With an entire range of genuine issues like galloping inflation on which he could legitimately have withheld his support, Gandhi seized on the red herring of the alleged surveillance.

In a speech in parliament on 6 March, Shekhar attempted to recover his tattered dignity by calling Gandhi and his party time-servers and opportunistic *khidmatgars* (slaves) before resigning. In his first ever dignified act, the old rogue vowed that his party would not support Gandhi in his sordid numbers game.

Shekhar remains as caretaker PM until the election, which is likely to take place in the searing heat of May or June. Despite having failed to win sufficient pledges of support from turncoat MPs, Gandhi is now confident that the Congress can win. He bases his optimism on a single opinion poll, which suggested that he would win a 290-seat majority.

Little does this naive and vain man realise that an election, forced upon the country's irritated voters because two cops were passing the time of day outside his house, is likely to cost him dear.

As always in the murky waters of Indian politics, problems like double-digit inflation, depleted foreign exchange, rock-bottom petroleum reserves and increasing lawlessness continue to be incidental.



TRUE STORIES

CHRISTOPHER LOGUE

Illuminated by Bert Kitchen

TAKEN before the magistrate to say why she had failed to have her dog, 'Fingal', destroyed after he had bitten Councillor Shamus Hagen, Miss Irish Pickforth said:

"It was a nip. He came around canvassing. He said he knew he was badly bitten because he was a former athlete and was accustomed to extremes of pain, but he is now 68 and it is a long time since he saw running shoes. He got into the house by claiming to have been a friend of my parents since childhood, but they had never heard of him."

Agreeing that she gave Cllr Hagen two lumps of brick to throw at Fingal if the dog reapproached him, Miss Pickforth continued:

"Fingal was perfectly quiet until the Councillor mentioned Northern Ireland. Then Fingal gave him a nip. No one in our family has any interest in politics. When I told my father that his friend Cllr Hagen was downstairs asking for his vote, he said he was in bed for the afternoon but to give the man his thanks."

Adjourned.

MR ROBERT WOOD and Mr Ian Armstrong, two "gay-haters" who visited a public lavatory in Markeaton Park in order to relieve their passions, were given 12 months each after they assaulted Shaun Bramwell and David Bird, two undercover "gay patrol" policemen — both of whom needed medical treatment after the event.

REFERRING the case to the Central Medical Authority, Dr Mildred Dimple of Adelaide's social services, said:

"Before we continue to provide for Mr and Mrs Saunders I feel I should report that when the couple, both of whom are employed by the Adelaide Health Authority, found a toy penis covered in fur on an office desk, they both fainted, and since then Mr Saunders has claimed £20,000 in sick payments for acute anxiety, and Mrs Saunders has had £15,000 worth of counselling which includes squash and swimming lessons and an eight-month interior decorating course.

"IT WAS a night I shall never forget," said Mrs Davina Black of Amber Valley. "First my husband, Jack, was given a voucher for a free dinner at the Gandhi Tandoori in Spindon for being the millionth customer to use the Dolphin car park.

"When we got out we found he had been given a parking ticket. One hour later we were in the Gandhi and Jack, who had ordered a chicken tikka, was given lamb tikka. When he mentioned this to the waiter, the man produced a baseball bat and hit him on the head. Seconds later the place was in an uproar. Customers and staff fought a pitched battle until the police arrived."

REJECTING A CLAIM that the leisure committee's road sign YOU ARE APPROACHING DISTINGUISHED HOVE *should be replaced after it had been vandalised for the fifth time, Councillor Robert Bailey said:*

"Hove is not distinguished. It has no cinema, no theatre, its beaches are polluted, and its only green valley is about to become a superstore site."

Agreeing with Councillor Roberts, Ms Winifred Focal added: "He might have reminded us that Hove is twinned with Draveil in France, which is also a boring dump."

AFTER HE had admitted to being "the driver on the job", Mr Michael Early of Hainault explained that he had taken his friend Matthew Coles to a "secret rendezvous with the boss of South-West England's Kentucky Fried Chicken division, to sell him McDonald's classified house manual containing the vital recipe for cooking chips. We arrived, and when Matthew asked for £10,000 in cash the KFC boss identified himself as Detective Sergeant Tom Taylor and then arrested us."

INFORMATION: Derry Journal, nd; The Pink Paper No. 144; South Australian 24.10.90; Belper Express 3.10.89; Hove Leader 17.1.91; Brentford & Chiswick Times 11.1.91.

MONITORS: John Cottam, Victor Purcell, Simon Potter, Tom Ling & Rowena Whitehead, Tim Walker, Pearl Pelfrey.

THE PRIVATE EYE COMPLETE GUIDE TO WHAT'S ON BBC, ITV, CHANNEL 4, SATELLITE AND CABLE TV

Er... nothing.

And there will be carriages, of metal, not drawn by horses, in the windows of which will be signs reading, "Honk if you had it last night"... Whoa! This can't be right...

Nostradamus: the fatal edit.

Ralph Stoddy's war

Britain's most angry artist gives his response to the Gulf catastrophe

I thought to myself, Stoddy, I thought, this makes my blood boil. Bloody right, I thought, I'm going to bloody throw tins of red paint at bloody pictures torn out of bloody books. War is terrible and people have said the same about these pictures. *(That's enough Stoddy. Ed.)*

The Gulf War — An Apology

IN recent days, along with all other newspapers, we may have given the impression that the war in the Middle East was a tremendous victory over an evil dictator who used poison gas against his own people. We may well have further suggested that the war had been brought to a triumphant conclusion, and that we would be hearing little more from Mr Hussein ever again. Headlines such as "Hussein is Finished", "Evil Dictator Flees To Algeria" and "Now Iraq Will Be Free" may, we acknowledge, have helped to further this impression.

We now realise that these claims were totally unfounded, and that Mr Saddam Hussein is alive and well and gassing his people just as he did before.

We further accept that allegations that the Republican Guard had in some way been finished off by the allies were entirely untrue and that the Republican Guard is indeed engaged in a massive tank battle against unarmed civilians, from which all the indications are that they may emerge victorious.

We offer our apologies to President Saddam Hussein for any distress that the war may have caused him, and sincerely hope that after he has regrouped he will allow us to go to war with him again, as it seems he is the only person we can beat.

We have agreed to pay a very substantial sum in reparations to Mr Hussein.

On other pages:

'Saddam — The Great Survivor' by William Rees-Mogg p.94
Saddam At 80 — Tributes Pour In p.95
Baghdad To Host 1998 Olympics? p.96
Unfunny cartoon by Garland p.99

Dog bites Queen

by Our Royal Staff
Rabid Lionel Blue

IN A sensational attack today, a poodle belonging to Mr Rupert Murdoch broke away from his leash and attacked Her Majesty the Queen.

The poodle, answering to the name of "Brillo", was not previously thought to be dangerous.

"He had no bite at all," said Mr Murdoch. "That's why I got him."

The Scotch Poodle, easily recognisable by its sparse, wiry hair, had always shown complete obedience and had taken part in a number of trials.

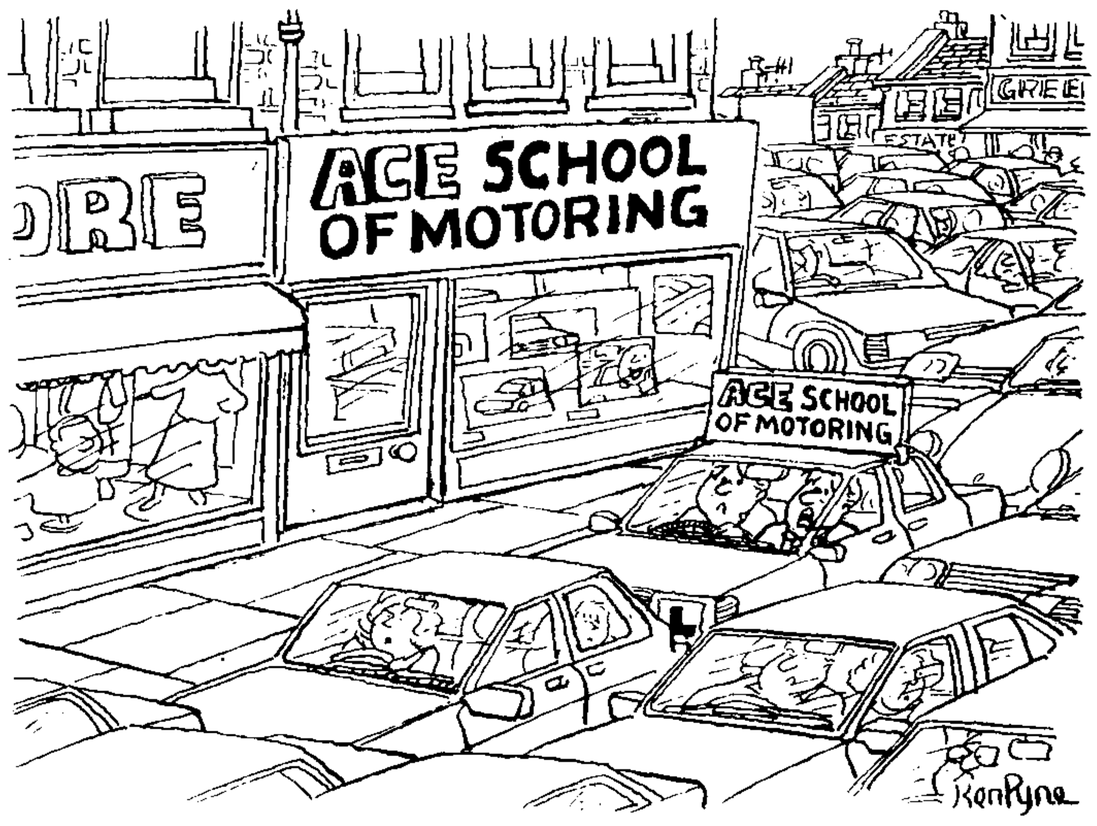
Carmen Proetta

Dog specialist Dr Roger Pugford said last night:

"Scotch Poodles like Brillo very often simply copy the behaviour of their masters. Brillo obviously thought that savaging the Queen was a good idea."

There were immediate calls to have Brillo put down following the incident, but Mr Murdoch refused, saying: "Brillo is very well trained. He will chase any story I throw his way. I'm not going to put him to sleep. But I might sell him to Robert Maxwell."

Pamella Bordes is 29.



"I'm afraid that's it, Mr Haythorpe — your hour's up"

GLENDA SLAGG

Fleet Street's PATRIOT MISSY (Geddit?)

Hercule Poirot?!? Don'tcha love him?!?! With his cute waxed moustache and his beguiling Norwegian accent *(shurely 'Belgian'? Ed)* **I say this sexy sleuth is top of the TV tecs!!?**

" 'Ullo 'Asteengs! Eet ees Poirot who solves ze case!!?!"

Mmmmm! Indeedy doody, don't he just!!?!

Hercule Poirot!!?! Aren't-chasickofhim!!?! With his out-of-date hat and silly accent, this boring Belgian bloodhound takes the bleeding biscuit!!?!

Clear off, so-called

Hercule?!?! And take your sidekick Hastings with you — for Gawd's sake?!?!

Hey mister!!?! Gotcher Red Nose on yet!!? (Cos it's Comic Relief Day — in case you'd forgotten!?)

I say three cheers for the Gutsy Gagging Gals 'n' Guys who help to raise millions for the nation's toddlers?!?!

Who says us Brits can't take a joke!?! Come on, gang, and dig deep into your wallets!?!

Don't they make you sick!?! The gaggle of so-called comics trying to kid us that THEY CARE!!?!

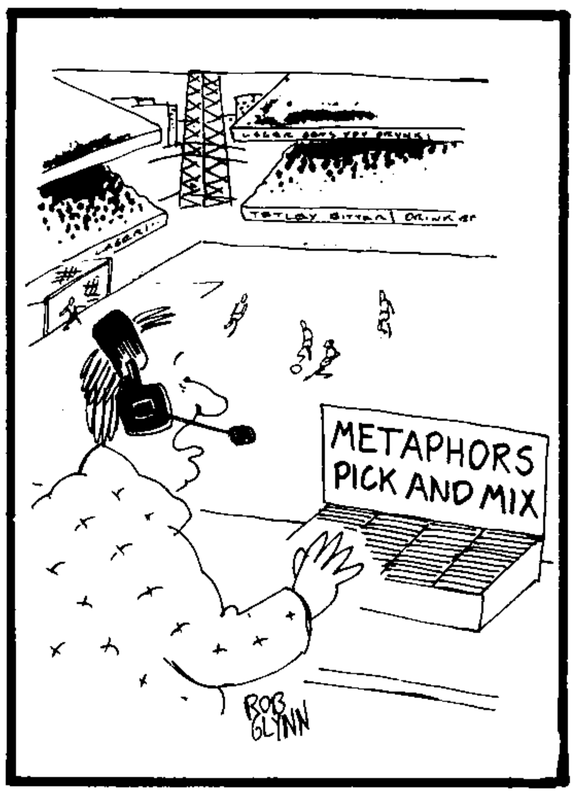
They can take their red noses and shove them where most of them talk from?!? And I don't mean their mouths, mister!!?!!

No, but seriously — Mel, Rowan, Griff and Co — they're doing a grand job!?!

Hear *Desert Island Discs* **with Low Life star Jeff Bernard!!?!?**

Does this geezer need a brain operation — or what?!?

I like a drop as well. Sue?!? Can I be on?!? Pleeeeeeease!!!?!



Here they are — Glenda's Desert Island Dishes!!?!

Kenny Dalglish! Now you've got nothing to do on Saturday afternoons, you could always pop round to Glenda's — and I'll give you a pre-match warm-up!!

Dominic Lawson!?!? If it's *Spectator* sports you're after, I'm your gal!/! (Geddit?!?)

Lord Jacobovitz?!? Crazy name — crazy guy!?!?

Byeeeeeee!!!!

Puffins seized in dawn swoop

by Our Men in the Hebrides
S. Johnson and J. Boswell

HUNDREDS of social workers were yesterday parachuted onto the uninhabited Scottish island of Mugg, where they took "into care" three guillemots, four puffins and seven sheep.

Said Roz McWimmin, 42, Co-ordinator for the Strathclyde Social Services Child Abuse Outreach Unit: "We have very good reason to believe that these animals have been subjected to Satanic rites and ritual abuse."

"I cannot understand this at all," said the island's lighthouse keeper, Jimmy McFraggle, 82. "We've never known anything like this on Mugg before. But we've all got to move with the times, and I'm sure these social workers know what they're talking about."

Yes, It's *Twin Peaks* Rhyming Slang!

FBI	**Cherry pie**
New shoes	**Same time as News**
Lynch, David	**Must be rabid**
Twin Peaks	**Plot creaks**
Mark Frost	**Everyone's lost**
Agent Cooper	**Women think super**
Shelly	**Men glued to telly**
Audrey Horne	**Porn**
Dirty macs	**One-eyed jacks**
Man from Hong Kong	**Wasn't in it long**
Palmer, Laura	**Bit of a snorer**
One-armed man	**Ratings down pan**
Tibetan theories	**No third series**
The White Horse	**Inspector Morse**

(He was last time. Ed)

AIR CHINA INFRIGHT MAGAZINE
The 2nd Issue, Nov. 1989

Adviser: YANG SHUNZUN, YUZO NAKANISHI
Producer: HOU-YUXIANG, TAKESHI AOKI
Chief editor: YE DONGCHENG

VIEWING

By appointment only, through Hill & Morrison (0256 702892).

DIRECTIONS

From Junction 6 of the M3 follow the signposts to Basingstoke, at the first roundabout turn left (Alton) and continue to the next roundabout, turn left again (Alton) and then go straight over the Venture roundabout (Alton) underneath the motorway and take the first right hand turning signposted to Cliddesden which you will then come into after about a mile. Continue past the village pond and Owl Cottage will be found after approximately 200 years on your left hand side.

A Doctor writes

As a doctor, I am often asked: "Why does Mrs Thatcher go around crying all the time and looking very sad?"

The simple answer is that she is suffering from depression, or *Thatcheria totallywashedupensis*, to give it its full medical name. However, if you want a second opinion, you should consult the *Daily Telegraph*. There you will learn that Mrs Thatcher has in fact never looked better, is enjoying a new lease of life, and cannot wait to get back to her desk in 10 Downing Street.

If, after reading this, you feel unwell, you should consult a doctor immediately.

© *A. Doctor*

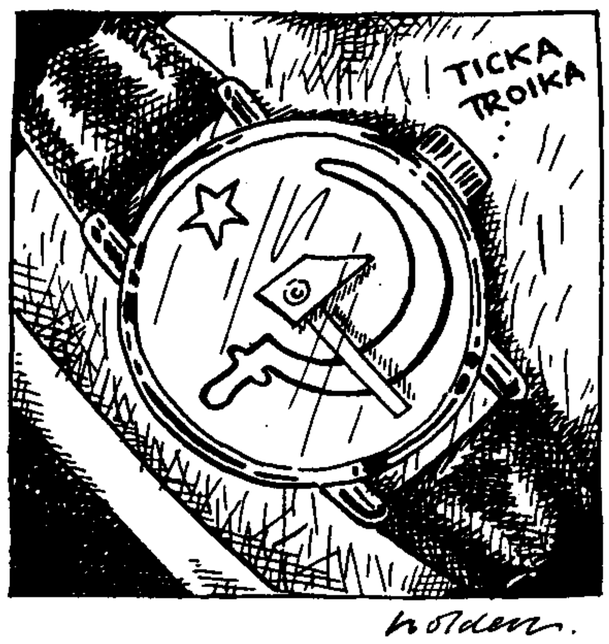
The Secret DIARY OF JOHN MAJOR aged 47¾

Monday

At 6.30 this morning I was woken up by Mr Hurd. He handed me a plane ticket and told me that today was the day I had decided to go to Russia. "Oh, yes," I said, "I have seen it on the map in my office. It is a very big place. You could easily get lost." "That's a good idea!" said my friend Chris, who had just popped in to make sure that I had been briefed on what I was to say to Mr Gorbachev when I got there.

Mr Hurd told me that the Russians were going through a very difficult patch, because their economy is in ruins and they have very bad inflation. "That's good," I said, "it means we will have a lot in common."

The most important thing to decide was what I should wear,



because Russia is very cold. Norman has bought me a grey fox-fur hat, which looks very stylish! It matches the suit I am going to wear. Mr Hurd has also given me a special phrase book of Russian words, compiled by the experts at the Foreign Office. The first one is "Mrs Thatcher is very well. Thank you for asking." The next one is "I am John Major. Our policies remain unchanged."

On the plane to Moscow I noticed a lot of journalists whom I had met in Germany. In my considered judgement it was very nice indeed to see them again! On the flight I practised my Russian and, by the time we landed, I had already learned to say "Oh da" which means "oh yes". Chris told me that this was all I needed to reply whenever Mr Gorbachev said something.

Tuesday

Here I am in Red Square. It is much bigger than you'd think from the pictures, but in other ways it is exactly like Streatham because the only shop is a McDonald's. They told me that Mr Gorbachev was free to see me and I was taken in to a very big room with chandeliers. There was Mr Gorbachev, just like in his pictures. He shook hands with me and then he began to make a speech which lasted a very considerable period of time. In fact, I looked at my watch and it took four hours. Then I thanked him for giving me so much of his time. Afterwards, I was taken into another room to talk to the journalists who had come with me on the plane. I told them that, in my judgement, Mr Gorbachev was a man I could do business with whom, which is what Mrs Thatcher used to say when she met him!

Then I had some free time for sightseeing. I suggested that I should meet the famous Mr Yeltsin, whom I had heard so much about, but they said that he was not important, and anyway he was probably drunk and would soon be dead. Instead, they suggested that I should go to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, but unfortunately the taxi driver said he didn't know where it was.

Wednesday

Today we went to Kuwait. To get there we had to go to Africa, India and lots of other countries which I had never been to before. I must remember to look them up on my map when I get home! Eventually we got there in the dark. I said to Mr O'Donnell, who tells me what to say to the newspapers, that it would be very nice to be able to see things for myself and to travel incognito without anyone knowing who I was. He said he was sure that there wouldn't be any problem with this. And it was true. When we arrived, no one seemed to take any notice at all. He must have radioed ahead, oh yes.

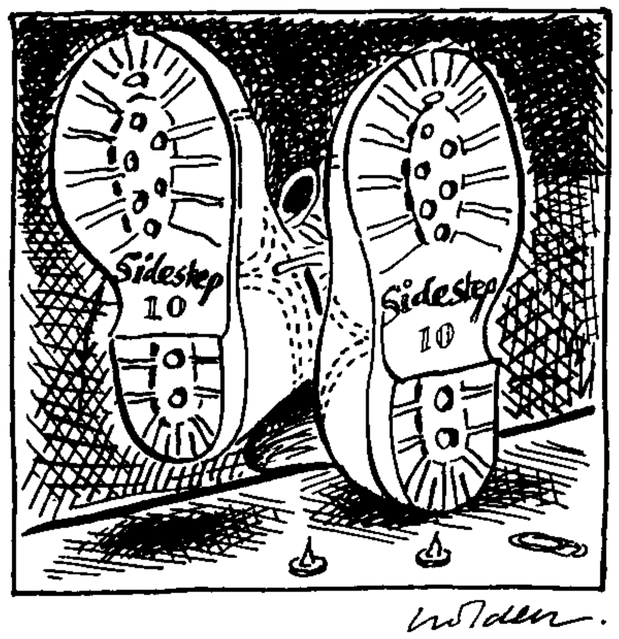
When we were in the airport, I took off my fur hat and changed into a special grey pullover that Norman had put in for me to wear in the desert.

Then they said that they were going to take me for a drive, but that they couldn't tell me exactly where for security reasons. After we had been driving around for a very considerable period of distance, we came to lots of soldiers standing round a tank. A general with a French name who spoke very good English shouted "Stand easy, gentlemen, there's someone here who wants to say a few words to you."

I got up on the tank and told them Norma's joke about the camel and the two Iraqi doctors. They all laughed, except me. I still don't understand it! Then I said I hoped they would all be home soon in time for the next election, but that of course I couldn't tell them the exact date when that would be. I began to explain to them why I couldn't say any more at this time, but I noticed that they were so tired after all the fighting that they had fallen asleep. Then the French general called for "three cheers for Tom King" and they all woke up.

Thursday

Today I got home to find Mr Heseltine sitting at my desk as usual. "Come in, John," he said, "I've got something very important to tell you." "Oh, yes," I said, "Have you decided what we're going to do about the poll tax?" "Yes," he said, "I've decided to leave it as it is until after the election." "But then we'll lose and I'll be out of a job," I said. "Dead right, squire," he said, putting his feet up on my desk, "you're not as



dim as you look." "Thank you," I told him. We hit it off very well indeed nowadays. I used to think he didn't like me.

Friday

When I was having breakfast, imagine my surprise when I saw in the newspaper that there had been an opinion poll which said that I was the most popular prime minister there had ever been. Even more popular than Mr Churchill. I suppose there are some similarities. We have both won a war against a man with a moustache.

Saturday

Chris pops in to tell me the news about the by-election in somewhere called Ribble. I could not find it on my *Daily Telegraph* map so obviously it can't be very important.

"It's bad news," says Chris. "It was one of our safest seats." I thought about this for a considerable period of time and then I said: "Of course it will be quite different when it comes to the General Election, oh yes." "It had better be," he said, "or we will be out of a job. And by the way have you heard what Mrs Thatcher said in America? It's no help having her sounding off in the background."

I had to disagree. "I wouldn't be where I was today if it wasn't for Mrs Thatcher, and her ideas are very helpful," I said.

POETRY CORNER

In Memoriam
Serge Gainsbourg and the Indy children's newspaper

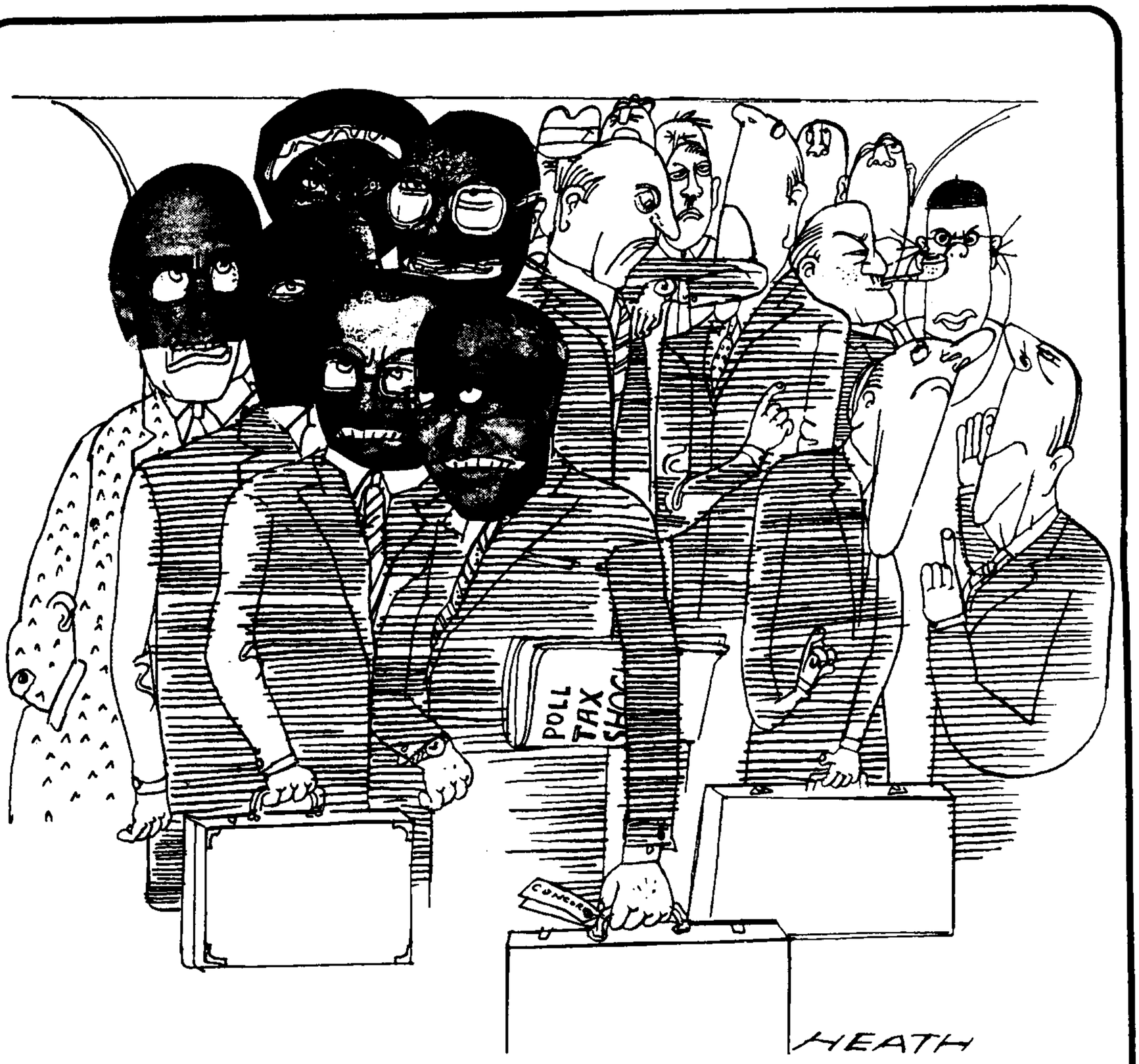
So. Farewell
Then
Serge Gainsbourg,
Famous French
Singer.

Je t'aime
(I love you).
Yes, that
Was your
Catchphrase.

The Indy.
No one loved
You.

That was
Yours.

E.J. Birkin (17½)



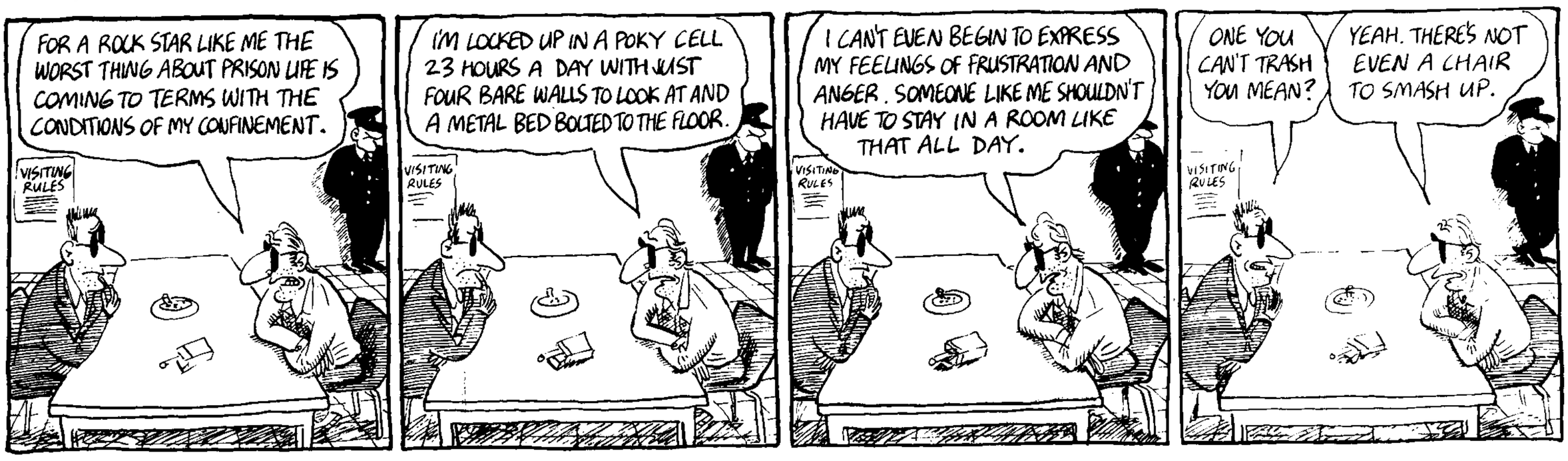
Great Bores Of Today.

"*Ding! Dong!* Good morning ladies and gentlemen this is your *ackackacka* line information service we apologise *squeak squeak squeak* firty-five to Muswell Hill *shshshshsh gurgle gurgle* Raynes Park we regret that the lifts are out of service *mmmmmm* two lumps mate *squawk squawk* continue their journey at street level *thump thump* closed owing to staff shortages *whaang!* platform four southbound trains only the next Circle Line train will arrive in approximately *sssssssschsch* warn customers to retain their personal belongings *bonkatabonkakata* report immediately unattended pcakages *yuddiyuddiyuddi* thank you very much ladies and gentlemen we hope you enjoy your journey... *Ding! Dong!*"

● **Ron Pickering went to Stratford Grammar School, not Wanstead High School as the obituary in yesterday's Guardian stated. The Sadler's Wells singer John Hargreaves (Obituary, February 11) was 80, not 76, and his wife is Mirriam nee Baraclough, not the soprano Janet Hamilton-Smith.**

Celeb

LIGGER


FOR A ROCK STAR LIKE ME THE WORST THING ABOUT PRISON LIFE IS COMING TO TERMS WITH THE CONDITIONS OF MY CONFINEMENT.
VISITING RULES
I'M LOCKED UP IN A POKY CELL 23 HOURS A DAY WITH JUST FOUR BARE WALLS TO LOOK AT AND A METAL BED BOLTED TO THE FLOOR.
VISITING RULES
I CAN'T EVEN BEGIN TO EXPRESS MY FEELINGS OF FRUSTRATION AND ANGER. SOMEONE LIKE ME SHOULDN'T HAVE TO STAY IN A ROOM LIKE THAT ALL DAY.
VISITING RULES
ONE YOU CAN'T TRASH YOU MEAN?
YEAH. THERE'S NOT EVEN A CHAIR TO SMASH UP.
VISITING RULES

Yes, it's Radio Four back to normal...

REDHEAD: So, what you're saying, Mr Rifkind, is that 40-ton lorries should be allowed to park in lay-bys, even if it puts thousands of innocent toddlers at risk?

RIFKIND: No, Brian, as I said before, only last week I set up the new Lay-By Regulatory Authority to look at ways in which lay-by safety can be improved across the board, and until it produces its first report I think it would be prudent to suspend judgement before offering any firm conclusions.

REDHEAD: Thank you, minister. And from all of us here in the *Today* studios, a very good morning to you...

ANNOUNCER: And now, with news of what's in store for you later today here on Four, here is Catriona McQuorkindale.

McQUORKINDALE: After the 9 o'clock news, it's your chance to call Nick Ross.

ROSS *(on tape, for it isn't he)*: Hullo. Our topic this morning is one that is causing furious debate in almost every home in the country — rearscreen window-wipers, should they be made compulsory? Or would this be an infringement of our basic civil liberties? If you have an opinion on this controversial subject, call Michael Parkinson on LBC, because no one else will.

McQUORKINDALE: And then, at 11.05, it's *The Toast Programme*, introduced as ever by Alison Hovis.

HOVIS: Hullo. In today's *Toast Programme* we'll be looking at a new Swedish toaster which, according to the manufacturers, makes it impossible to burn toast. We'll be talking to a Harley Street psychiatrist who uses toast in her therapy sessions. Why the Italians are bottom of the European toast-eating table. And — is the Government doing enough to help the disabled to get their fair share of toast? All this and more in *The Toast Programme*, here on Four after the 11 o'clock news.

McQUORKINDALE: And then, between 11.45 and 12.00, we've got the first of our new-look *Woman's Hour*, introduced by Robert Dunkley and Nigel Maudsley.

MAUDSLEY: Hi, guys! Have we got some action for you on *Woman's Hour* today! There's hang-gliding in the Mendips, a consumer report on condoms — who said it was a girl's job? — bear-shooting in the Rockies, and a look at some of the new floral waistcoats in this month's *Esquire*. Ciao!

McQUORKINDALE: And then this afternoon sees the return of *The Scissor Show*. Here's Jenny Couteau to tell us what they've cut out for us today.

COUTEAU: In this afternoon's *Scissor Show* we look at a new design of scissor from Denmark, which, the manufacturers claim, will never become blunt. We'll be talking to a well-known Harley Street specialist about what she calls the "Struwelpeter Syndrome", which causes hundreds of men and women to come out in a rash at the mere sight of a pair of scissors. Why Greece is bottom of the EEC scissor-using league. And is the Government doing enough to provide left-handed scissors for the hard-of-hearing? All this and more in *The Scissor Show*, at 2.15 this afternoon.

McQUORKINDALE: And then, at 8.10 this evening, Angela Rippon takes over in her new role as presenter of our new-look *Pick of the Week*.

RIPPON: Hullo, I can't tell you how pleased I am to be given a job back here on the BBC — or indeed anywhere else, for that matter!

McQUORKINDALE: Then, wrapping up the evening, there's another chance to hear yesterday's edition of *The Driving Quiz*, the quiz about driving, with our regular team captains Stirling Moss and Barry Cryer. Their guests are Gloria Hunniford and Willy Rushton — and in the chair, as always, John Stalker.

STALKER: Barry Cryer, your starter for two points... What has the Government recently done about the problem of lorries in lay-bys?

CRYER: I don't know. I haven't been laid by anyone for weeks!

(Huge gale of studio laughter)

STALKER: Ha, ha, ha. I'm afraid we'll have to give that one to Stirling Moss.

MOSS: Are we talking about the new regulatory body they've set up? At least, that's what it says on the card in front of me — whoops!

(Continued for ever)

In Today's New Soaraway Daily Telegraph

News

Viz — Why *Telegraph* Readers Will Love Bollocky Bill, Perry The Pervert, Dirty Max and all the gang!

Fashion

Nude Women — They're In! Our Editor, Lavinia Starborgling, explains why women are wearing no clothes in the *Telegraph* (because they're desperate for readers).

Arts

Exclusive interview with Rap Supremo M.C. Knacker, lead singer of Britain's most exciting new "crew", The Charles Moore Experience.

Health

Sex — how dirty films can keep your marriage alive.

Plus

This month's special offer from the *Daily Telegraph* Blue-Vid Club: "Talking Dirty", a step-by-step talking guide to increasing your sales figures.

Plus

Defence Editor Brig. Trumper-Smythe on why hanging is too good for the likes of Jeremy Paxman and the other media traitors.

Plus

Young Telegraph – A special Saturday supplement for the Under-70s.

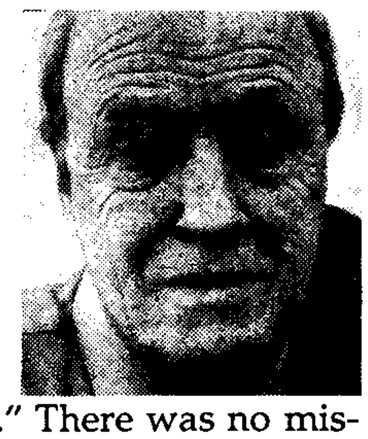
"They must be loaded at No. 12 — that's the third time this year I've seen the plumber's car there..."

Dahl: Sex maniac/**Eliot:** Mass murderer/**Dylan Thomas:** Liked a drop

THE KINGSLEY AMISH MEMOIRS

Sir Kingsley Amis, novelist, critic, wit, philosopher and drunk, has bestridden literary life for seventy years. Now for the first time Sir Kingsley looks back over the crowded decades and can't remember anything of interest because he was drunk all the time. Read these amazing extracts from The Book of the Year

The day Roald Dahl was rude to me



I SHALL never forget the day I met Roald Dahl, or was it Enid Blyton? Anyway, one of these absurd children's writers who make a lot of money. "Hullo, Kingsley," he said, "you're looking well." There was no mistaking the malice behind his fatuous pleasantries. What the fellow was trying to tell me was that I was overweight and that my last novel was a lot of tosh. "Well," I replied, quick as a flash, in the lavatory twenty minutes later, "that Postman Pat is full of shit." That put him in his place.

The night I met T.S. Eliot

I SHALL never forget the night I went on the piss with T.S. Eliot. First of all we got legless on brown ale in that pub in Soho which I can't remember the name of. Then Eliot said he knew of this place in Hampstead where there was plenty of birds and booze, so we got in a cab, which of course I had to pay for, despite the fact that he was rolling in money because of his piss-awful poems, which didn't even rhyme. He said he'd come out without his wallet. Ha, ha, ha, they all say that. So when we got there it was yours truly, as per usual, who had to shell out the 7/6. No, I tell a lie, there was also the tip, another 2d. Mean bastard. I can't say I remember much about the rest of the evening except that poor old Tom got brewers' droop when confronted by Tom Driberg in a tutu. Or was it Desmond Tutu in a driberg? Never mind, Tom may have been a bloody useless writer, but he was a good bloke to have the odd jar with.

Why I hated Dylan Thomas

I SHALL never remember the day I met this disgusting old drunk in a pub in Swansea. He was loud, bad-tempered, self-pitying, lecherous. He spent the whole evening telling everyone what a great writer he was, and how useless everyone else was. Somebody said: "Do you know who that is? It's Kingsley bloody Amis." "Don't be a fool," I said. "It's Philip Larkin, or is it Enoch Powell, or Anthony Powell, or Malcolm Muggeridge, or Charles Dickens?" What a shit *he* was, by the way, filthy rich and never paid for a round in his life. I never thought his poems were any good. Anyway, it doesn't matter. The important thing to remember is, er... mine's a Teacher's, old boy, make it a treble. I'm afraid I've forgotten my wallet...

NEXT WEEK: My night of passion with Mrs Thatcher, the world's sexiest woman.

Guinness One released

by Our Crime Staff
Anna Ford-Open-Prison

THE controversial "Guinness One" was released from prison today, following an admission in the High Court that he was "definitely guilty".

Mr Gerald Ronson, 53, had been jailed for "making a bomb" in the City, after forensic tests had shown that he had been handling huge numbers of £20 notes.

However, subsequent enquiries have discredited the "£20 note" theory and shown that exactly the same effect could have been produced by handling some totally different substance, such as £50 notes.

Said Inspector Knacker from his Sydney, Australia, hideaway: "This man is definitely guilty, which is why he was let out after five minutes. If he had been innocent we would have kept him in for another fifteen years."

Coffee	*35p*
Selection of sandwiches	*from60p*
Cheese or Pate Ploughpersons	*from £1.50*
Salads	*from £1.50*
Curry Goat and Rice	*£1.80*
Scampi in the basket	*£2.50*
Home cooked ham, fries and salad	*£2.50*

Lambeth Social Club

"Jollys"
FUNERAL DIRECTORS
7 Windsor Place
Upper Bristol Road, Bath
Tel: Bath 426822

Bath Evening Chronicle

"I'm making an appraisal of the people who will be making an appraisal of the people who will be making an appraisal of the teachers"

HEIR OF SORROWS

BY

SYLVIE KRIN

THE STORY SO FAR: Charles has entered the political arena with a controversial salvo in favour of Proportional Representation. Meanwhile, his mother has been bitten by a corgi.

Now read on...

"YOU ARE a silly boy!" The Queen, her arm bandaged in a sling fashioned from a horseshoe-patterned Hermesetas silk scarf, admonished a short, fat corgi, Hailsham, who had just cocked his leg against Charles's Green Porritt wellington.

Mother and son walked slowly along a ridge of sparse trees in Windsor Great Park, where a few brave crocuses raised their heads above the frozen sod, gaudy harbingers of the coming spring. Each bloom opened out to the sun's rays like the upturned face on an innocent choirboy *(Get on with it! Ed.)*

"But *you're* an even sillier boy, Charles. How many times must your father and I tell you *not* to get involved in politics?"

Charles idly kicked a stone and stammered: "Er... It was just a sort of casual remark... I had no idea that it would be blown up into such a big, you know..."

"Poppycock!" The Queen stopped and turned on her son. "You're not a child anymore, Charles. You knew perfectly well what you were doing. Anyway, you've always been a most unconvincing liar."

As she spoke, Hailsham leapt savagely and bit the remaining ear off Auberon, a snarling brute of a corgi, his head covered in scars from many a scrap of yesteryear.

Within seconds a pack of yapping, growling, biting beasts had joined in the fray. The Queen attempted to restore order by calling each by name:

"Ridley! Kingsley! Sir Alastair! Sir Robin! Farrar-Hockley! Rowse! Stop it at once!"

But the dogs paid no attention to their Royal Mistress.

"And anyway it seems a perfectly reasonable point to make." Charles continued to try and absolve himself, seemingly unaware of the canine fracas. "Do you realise that whilst over 23 per cent of people support the Green policy initiative, they do not have a single MP, whereas in Sweden..."

The Queen was finding it difficult to listen, as she was on her hands and knees attempting with her one good arm to lasso Sir Peregrine with his lead.

"As I was saying, in Sweden there are I think 19 Green MPs in the Smörgasbord..."

At this point the Queen was wrenched forward by the lead and disappeared from view, dragged down the embankment by a pack of slavering animals.

Walking on, oblivious, Charles continued: "You ought to read this book, Mater, by my friend Sir Laurens van der Post — *Electoral Reform Amongst the Aha-ha Tribe*. He puts it so well: 'A tree has only one trunk but it has many roots.' It's very true that, when you think about it, Mater. Mater? Mater?"

Charles halted abruptly. Where was she? She could be *so* indifferent to his views at times. It was one of her traits which he considered, yes, he had to say it... appalling.

"Help! Help!"

A distant cry brought him back to the present.

It seemed to be coming from the bottom of the embankment.

The sound of a helicopter filled the sky and within minutes it was hovering over the spot where he had last seen his mother.

Uniformed men in black masks, wearing the insignia of the Queen's Own Corgi Regiment (Motto: Shoot to Kill), descended from the chopper in well-rehearsed formation, whilst a fleet of fire engines thundered through the park.

Charles hurried to the brow of the knoll, whence he might better observe the cause of the alarums.

The scene that greeted him filled him with surprise and horror. Under a seething mass of corgis he could just discern his mother's tattered handbag, whilst the rest of her was lost from sight. Meanwhile the fire brigade were directing their powerful hoses at the gnashing melee of hounds and the Special Forces were advancing gingerly towards the dogs, releasing tear gas and firing rubber bullets.

Their commander, General de La Beagle, personally led the attack, which after several minutes of fierce combat left many men and dogs injured.

"Oh, my God," thought Charles in a moment of panic. "They've done for Mater. I'm going to be King..."

"I EXPECT you thought you were going to be King." The Queen gave Charles one of her rare smiles as she sat in the drawing room and dispensed tea, placing her now-plaster-clad left leg on an exquisite 17th-century velvet-covered embonpoint. Charles drank apprehensively from the blue and white Wedgwood bone china.

"I was only saying, Mater, that it's more fair if everyone is allowed a say and that every voice is heard equally, be they sort of Green or blue or alternative medicine... lowrise... community... wheatgerm bread..."

His voice trailed away as the Queen eyed him with a look he knew only too well.

"Every dog must have its say. Is that what you're suggesting?"

"Yes, yes," said Charles. "Absolutely."

The Queen gestured to her leg and commented tartly. "I would have thought this afternoon would have given you a little lesson about allowing the pack its freedom."

"But that's different. That's not the point. You see, in the new Czechoslovakia or even Romania, who would have thought..."

(To be continued)

KUWAIT CITY

Our boys go in

by **Red Ken Adair** of the Gulf News Pool

TODAY I accompanied the first British businessman to set foot in Kuwait for more than seven months.

As he proudly planted his card in the letterbox of the Kuwaiti Ministry for Reconstruction, he told me: "I've got a job to do. It's what I've been trained for. Now I just want to get it over with, and go home with a large contract."

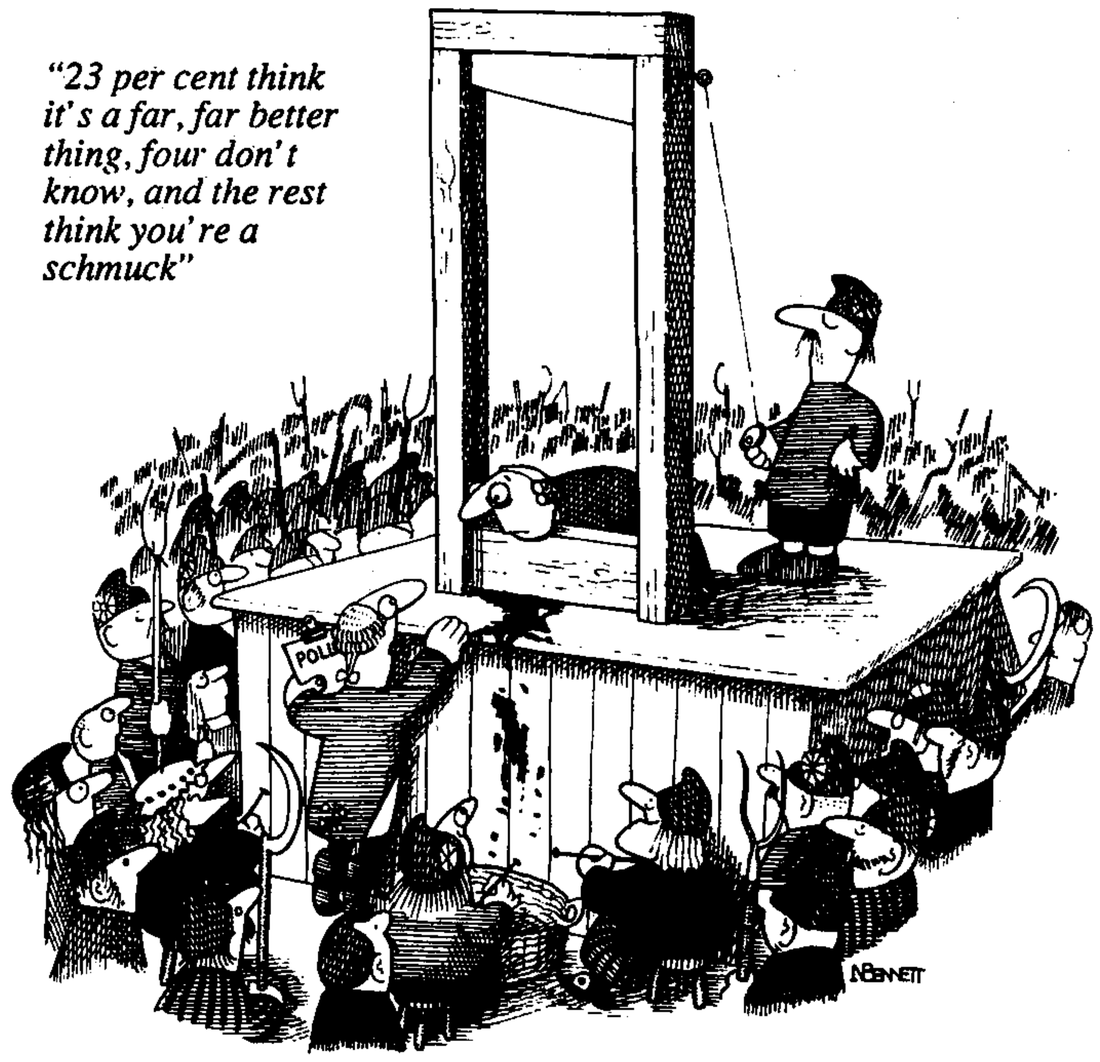
How did it feel, I asked, to be a member of the huge multinational task force of businessmen who are aiming to "clean up" in this war-torn and polluted country?

Ronald Boxwallah, 47, is Senior Overseas Production Manager at Gnome Allied Drainage, the Midlands-based sewers-to-drains conglomerate.

"We're all professionals here," he told me. "There's us, there's the Stuttgart-based Vorsprung Dorch Dungen Gesellschaft, and then of course there's the biggest outfit in the world, the Houston Sanitation Corp.

"It's going to be one hell of a battle, but there's no doubt who is going to win — the Americans."

"23 per cent think it's a far, far better thing, four don't know, and the rest think you're a schmuck"



The shocking book they are trying to ban!

THOMAS THE SEX MACHINE

by REV. TAWDRY

Thomas and Gordon are having an adventure.

"Oh, can I come?" asked Clarabel.

"Later, darling. If you're lucky."

Thomas and Gordon laughed salaciously.

"What shall I do?" said Clarabel.

Thomas gave her a fiver.

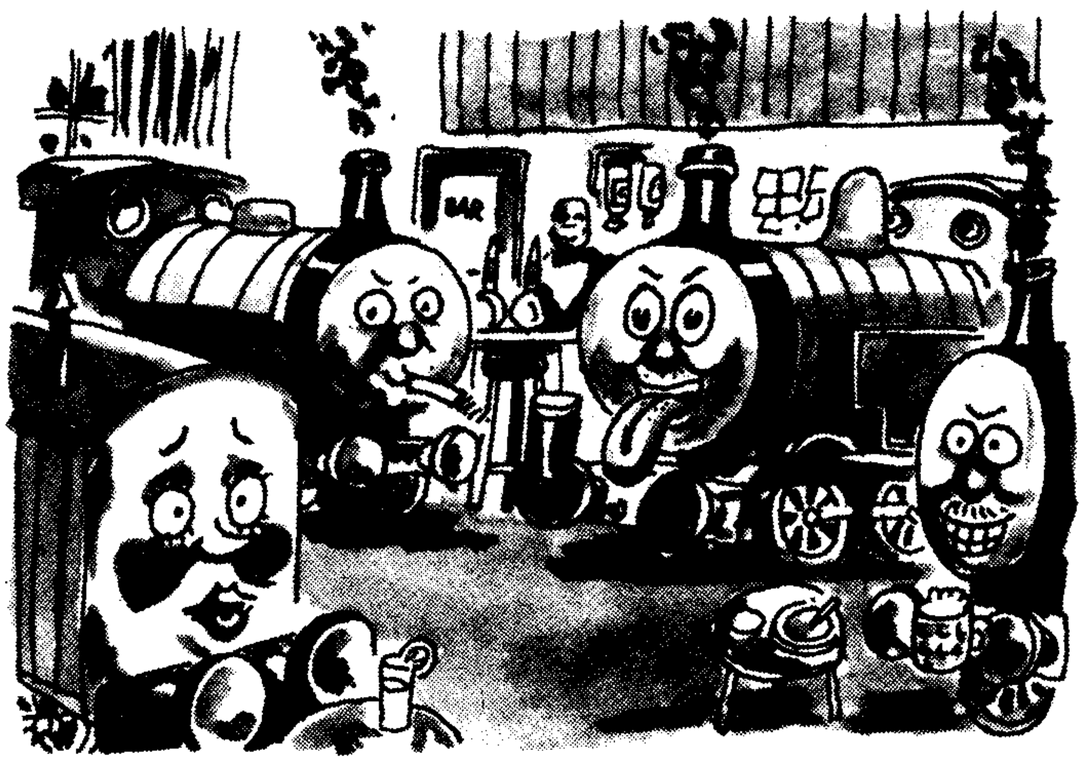
"Buy yourself something nice."

They laughed again.

"Let's get really well oiled," said Gordon.

"Good idea," said Thomas as they roared along dangerously fast to the pub.

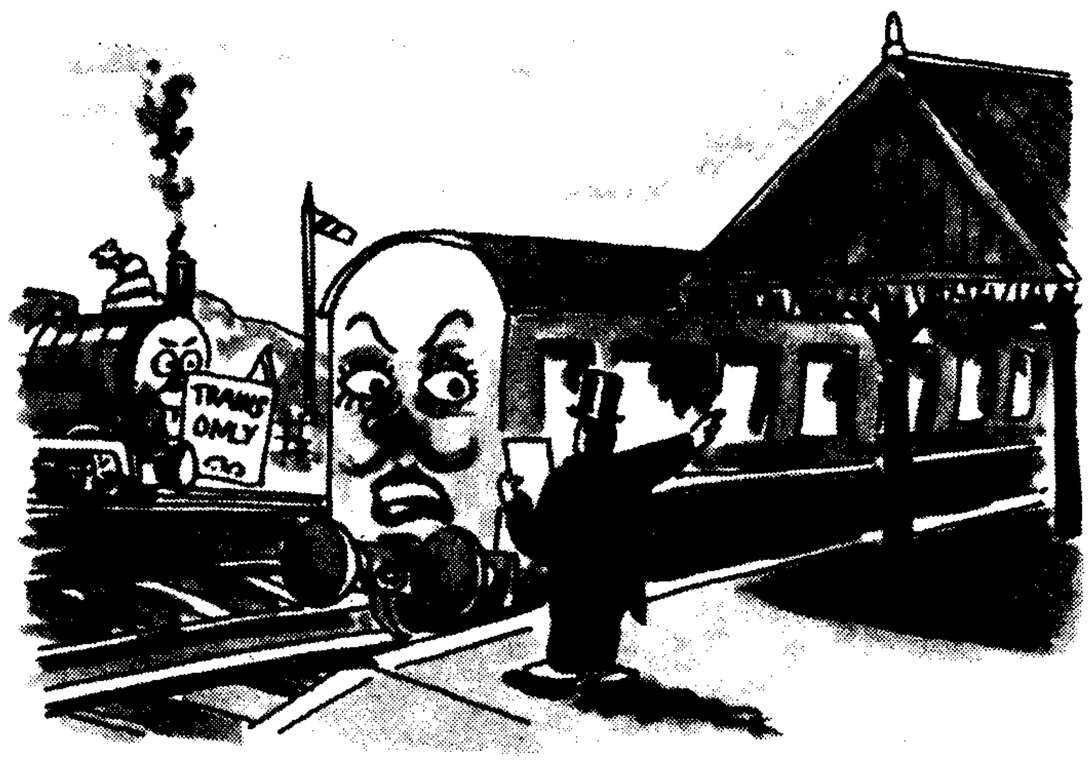
"See the rugby?" said Gordon. "Rob Andrew — what a poof!"



Later in the evening.

"Burp!" said Gordon. "Pulled any good coaches lately?"

"Woo-hay!" said Thomas to Clarabel as she was shunted from the pub. "Show us yer buffers, darlin'! Fancy a coupling?"



Meanwhile the Fat Controller was working out the schedule.

"Is there anything for me to do?" Clarabel the carriage asked.

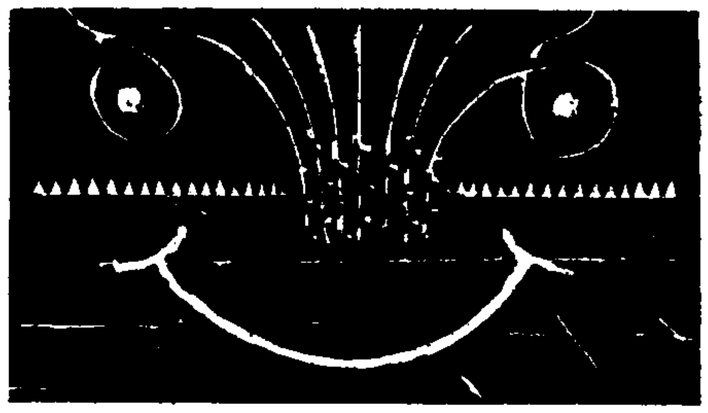
"Er... no, luv. Why don't you go and make us some tea or go home and have a baby?"

"I'll report you to the Equal Opportunities Commission," said Clarabel.

"Typical woman," they all said. "Irrational. Temperamental. Probably the wrong time of the month. Let's go and talk about cars."

"Great."

DIARY



PRINCESS MICHAEL OF KENT

May I first say how delighted I am that my PR representative — who, incidentally, has asked me to make it known that he also handles many other leading entertainers, such as Bobby Davro, the Roly-Polys, Martyn Lewis, Christopher Biggins, Freddie 'Parrot Face' Davis and my sister, Mrs Angie Best — has arranged with the editor and staff of this 'humorous' magazine that I should contribute to their prestigious diary as part of my career relaunch. Might I just add that, as from early May, I will be available, with or without my husband, Prince Michael of Kent, who is, as you know, President of the British Bobsleigh Federation, for all types of entertainment and celebration, ranging from cookery demonstrations and plaza openings through to dinner-dances and celebrity panel-games. Mr Jim Bowen of television's popular *Bullseye* programme has already shown a keen interest in having me appear in his excellent show's 'celebrity guest' slot, and Mr Des O'Connor, an old friend of the family from way back, seems sure that he can find a space for me on his new series, probably to close duetting with him on 'Edelweiss', that charming song from my fatherland from my hit musical *The Sound of Music*. You may remember that I played Maria Von Trapp in the highly successful film version.

For obvious reasons which we needn't go into, she has received virtually no publicity, but there has, in the last few years, been a new member of The Royal Family whom avid watchers might have observed from time to time. She is a Miss Sarah Ferguson, the daughter of a self-confessed ticket-tout. Good for her, and I for one wish her every success, but am I alone in worrying that she is not quite — how shall I put it — top drawer? It is most important in these trying times that those of us in the vanguard of The Royal Family take extra pains to guard the dignity and awe in which we are held by 'the common folk'. This young lady, or person, for all her considerable talents (she is, I am told, quite gifted at 'pulling faces') is perhaps in danger of letting the side down. Let us please, please, please preserve something of our traditional mystique. This was a point I was putting to Gloria Hunniford and top comedian Jim 'Nick-Nick' Davidson over a delicious complimentary meal at Stringfellow's hosted by Nigel Dempster only last week. Perhaps for her own sake Fleet Street editors might consider the value of a 'news blackout' on Miss Ferguson, poor love, for a short period of, say, ten years? I am perfectly prepared to take over the burden of her duties (price list available on request).

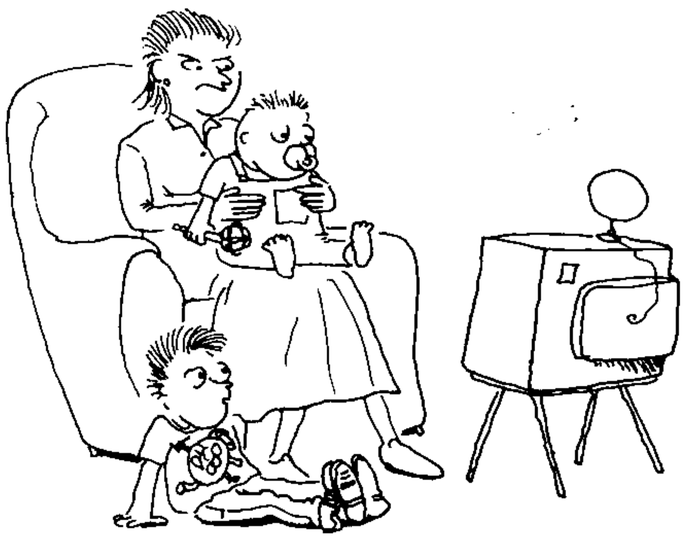
Many of you will have wondered these past few years exactly what I have been 'up to', as you say in this country. After a chaotic year in 1986, I was given the most marvellous surprise holiday — a complete rest in an upper tower of delightful Glamis Castle, where I was fed regularly and unstrapped under supervision for an hour every second Tuesday. During this time, I was forced to keep a 'low profile', as the ceiling was only 4ft 6ins, and spiked. Following a very pleasant couple of months spent amidst these historic surroundings, I was happy to sign a declaration of my wish to spend more time with my family for the next five years. But now it is 1991 at last, and I know that my return to public life will give a lot of pleasure to a lot of people — not least to my accountant!

In the meantime, I have been working hard, very hard. I have written no less than three books. Two of them are novels — *David Kopperfield*, a long tale set in Victorian times, and *Nurse Zhivago*, a panoramic novel set amidst the turmoil of the Russian Revolution. The third, an exciting new departure for me, is a children's book which I have called *Pudgie The Little Helicopter*, and the proceeds of which will be going to one of my favourite charities, 'The British Bobsleigh Federation (Widows Trust)'. Now my Royal duties are as onerous as ever; only last week I journeyed to Aberdeen to take part in a mud-wrestling competition (£325 and all expenses paid) and the week before I recorded an episode of *Blankety Blank* as part of an all-star line-up including the hilarious John Inman, Radio One's Dave Lee Travis and pocket-sized chanteuse Lynsey de Paul. I hope that this will stem some of the criticism in various newspapers that we in The Royal Family have not been doing our bit during the recent conflict.

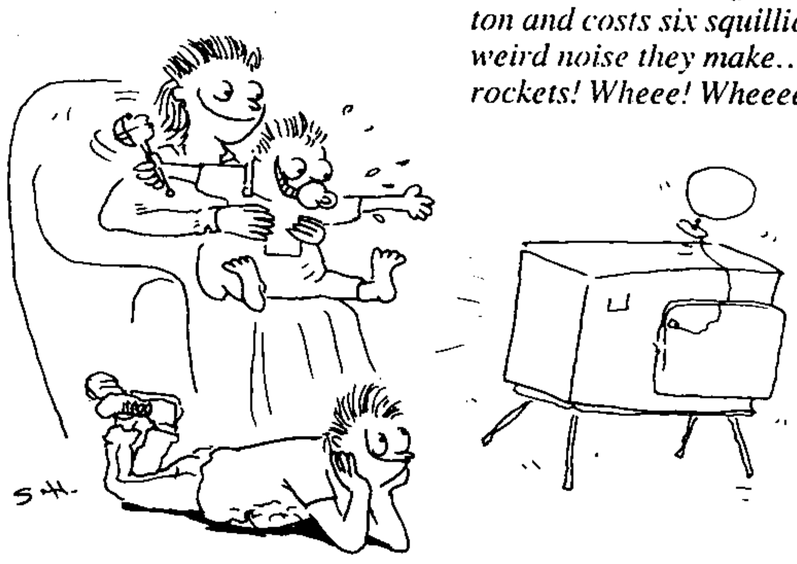
Thank goodness the rumour-mongers have ceased their idle tittle-tattle about myself and my husband, who, on his marriage to me, became Prince Michael of Kent. He is now shaping up to be a very useful member of our Family, a thoroughly worthy escort to his wife and something of a character in his own right, with a beard of his own, quite a few conversations to hand, and so on.

As a couple, I think that the nation will join with me in agreeing that we are now ideally placed to 'take over the reins' should anything untoward happen to that branch of the family occupying the throne at present. To this end, I have flown over my mother, Mrs Eileen Skunk (née Countess Rogala-Kozacorawski) of the upmarket high class *haute couture* boutique 'Odds 'n' Sods' of Sydney, Australia, for an intensive training course in acting the role of Queen Mum. After just two weeks, she is already able to hold a knife and fork, and within a month her tutor confidently expects her to be able to place her gum behind her right ear without first saying, "Time to give the old phlegm a bit of a breather." By early May, she will be out of her dungarees and into some specially-purchased crinolines, and come June she will have learnt to walk in shoes. This means that, just so long as the present occupant does not die before July, we will be ideally situated to substitute a brand new Queen Mother into place within minutes of the full state funeral. With HRH Queen Eileen the Queen Mother in position, the present Queen will find herself in the invidious position of failing to be the true daughter of the new Queen Mother. I have the very greatest respect for her integrity and I know that the country can count on her to accede quietly and responsibly with the barest minimum of fuss in favour of Queen Marie-Christine. And I am delighted to say that my husband has kindly agreed to act as consort until a more suitable replacement can be found. God Bless You All.

"Because of events in the Gulf, children's programmes are cancelled again. So, instead of 'Sesame Street', we now go live to the Gulf..."



"Here I am in a convoy of tanks — there are 1-2-3-4-5 tanks in front of us and 1-2-3-4-5 — TEN tanks... um... ELEVEN tanks... and oh wow! look at those BIG RED ROCKETS! 1-2-3 rockets! Each of those rockets is bright red, six-feet long, weighs a ton and costs six squillion pounds... Listen to the weird noise they make... there they go — 1-2-3 rockets! Wheee! Wheeeee! Wheeeee!"



Literary Review

Bang to rights

Nothing To Declare: Prison Memoirs
Taki
(Viking, £15.95)

WHAT'S prison for then? Reform, restraint or retribution? It's an 'ard one, innit? Nobody knows.

Many fine minds have wrestled with the problem. The great novelist Michael Ignatieff began his career with a book called *A Just Measure of Pain: The Penitentiary in the Industrial Revolution 1750-1850*. Iggy studied the history of Pentonville prison, which was founded in the belief that crime was caused by environmental factors, rather than simple wickedness, and that by controlling a criminal's environment, he could be reformed. This questionable notion survived "because it spoke to a heartfelt middle-class desire for a social order based on deferential reconciliation". Got that?

On 14 December 1984 Taki Theodoracopulos, a rich Greek "playboy", was sent to Pentonville for four months for importing cocaine. He was let out early, on 28 February 1985. So what are Taki's thoughts on the purpose of imprisonment?

"My prison experience has brought me to consider a number of questions about our penal system and our current social attitudes," he writes, "but so far, not one of these questions has led me to a single answer I can stand on." (Let alone a leg.) "The problem, of course, is complex to the point of absurdity. How do we rehabilitate people who can't read and write? Who are addicted to drugs? Who can make a living only by hurting other people? Do we lock them up and throw the key away? Yes, of course, what else is there to do? No, of course not, how inhumane! What's the right answer? I haven't a clue."

Taki isn't being modest. *Nothing to Declare* woefully demonstrates that the man is far more closely confined by his own stupidity than he ever was by prison bars.

As an account of life inside it is banal. The cells are small. Slopping out is horrid. Everything's filthy and there's a nasty smell. The other prisoners are a bad lot. Most of the warders are OK, though one or two are unpleasant. The food is poor. Time drags.

As a tour round Taki's mind, *Nothing To Declare* is far more alarming. Woven into the prison diary is the story of his life. It's a chronicle of wasted time. He's spent a lot of money, played sports, fucked around and induced snob magazines such as the *Spectator* and *Vanity Fair* to run columns by him about this "high life".

Somehow he has persuaded himself that they've shown him to be a fearless critic of the idle rich. "I've often found myself attacking the rich and powerful in my various columns simply because they are rich and powerful," he writes. He fails to understand that editors use him as an exhibit, not a critic.

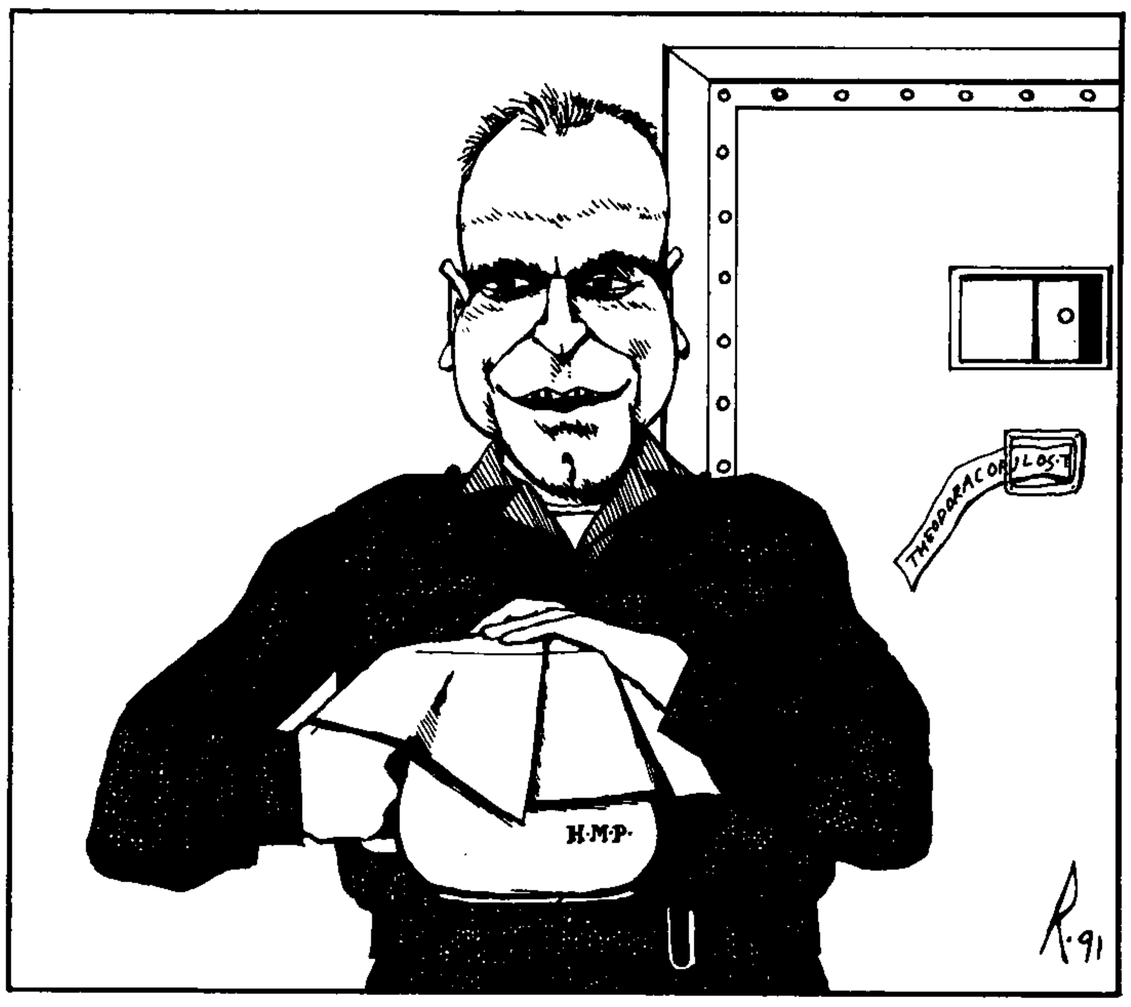
The style of *Nothing To Declare* is the product of an unquestioning belief in the importance of his exclusive world. The suicide of another convict is described as "very depressing". Only the accidents that befall the rich are "tragic". "A tragedy occurred that put a damper on polo for the year. Elie de Rothschild, a leading member of French polo and a scion of the banking family, was struck by a ball during a particularly lively practice match and lost his eye..." "All three have since died tragically: Chandon, the champagne heir, while racing a car, the two Crawley brothers while flying their private plane..." And so drearily forth.

Everything in Taki's circle is the biggest, the best, the most. His publisher, Tom Stacey, has "the best-looking secretaries in the whole of England"; John Aspinall is "England's greatest gambler and poshest party-giver"; Taki's yacht was "the most beautiful sailing boat in the world..." By such reiterations, the futile rich seek to reassure themselves that they matter.

The only other stylistic flourish Taki can manage is laboriously ironic comparison of ordinary life with this high life. Thick snow? "The kind Gstaad sees all too seldom." Prison hygiene? "Bathing in prison, needless to say, is not exactly like bathing in Marienbad." A new mop? It's "the cleanest mop this side of the Carlyle Hotel".

Taki learns nothing from prison. He's incorrigible, because he hasn't got enough braincells to take correction. He believes otherwise, of course. For a few days he is made to sew buttons on army uniforms. "Time drags as never before. I think of the millions of women who have to do this type of work in order to live, and for the first time I understand the inhumanity of the Industrial Revolution," he bleats.

With *Nothing To Declare*, Taki has pioneered a new literary genre: the prison memoir in which the reader feels no sympathy whatsoever with the author. On the contrary, you're soon so annoyed by the self-important little shit that you're delighted he's banged up. "Deferential reconciliation", my arse. They should never have let him out.



SNIPCOCK & TWEED
SAY WHAT YOU LIKE ABOUT KINGSLEY AMIS....
MEMOIRS
...IT TOOK A LOT OF BOTTLE TO WRITE THAT STUFF
BASTARD! NOT EVEN A NAME CHECK!

Books & Bookmen

□ GEORGE Craig, the Dirty Digger's gold-chained chief executive who decreed that Collins should no more be Collins, is back in town from New York to destroy a further part of a once-proud publishing house.

HarperCollins and its subsidiary, Grafton, which had previously occupied separate premises in central London, were moved into one building in Hammersmith late last year, with smooth assurances that they would retain their separate identities.

Craig, frustrated that Grafton paperbacks are so much livelier than HarperCollins' foundering Fontana imprint, has characteristically decided to destroy both lists and amalgamate them under the exciting name "HarperCollins Paperbacks". No doubt talks are going on at the moment about how many salesmen and executives will be sacrificed in this latest effort to keep the Digger afloat.

What Craig doesn't know is that three of Grafton's very biggest authors, who all unaccountably happen to loathe Murdoch, have down the years been persuaded that the Digger and his henchmen are not involved with Grafton. Thus Grafton has until now been able to keep them sweet. All three may decamp as soon as the Grafton name is purged.

■ DEAR old Hodder & Stoughton stumbles on from crisis to crisis. It is now generally accepted by employees that horrid Simon & Schuster will soon bid for the fiction and non-fiction part of Hodder, while Elsevier will make an offer for the educational subsidiary, Edward Arnold.

Whoever ultimately owns the ailing company, which continues to command exemplary author loyalty, will not reside in Bedford Square. An internal memo reports that rents are now so high in central London that a move is essential. Although Mark Hodder-Williams claims that alternative accommodation will be sought within "inner" London, the last such reassuring statement led to the move of Edward Arnold to the arid wastes of Sevenoaks. Most London-based staff were, as a result, forced to leave.

The continuing speculation over splitting the company and selling it off piecemeal, the poverty-induced retreat from London, and the recent sub-inflation eight per cent pay increase have all convinced staffers that the game is nearly up and happier career prospects lie elsewhere.

Apology

IN the last edition of Private Eye, we published an article concerning legal proceedings brought by Macdonald & Co.

Not only was the article incorrect, but it also implied that the proceedings were without merit and had been unfairly brought.

We fully accept that that is not the position and are happy to put the record straight. We unreservedly apologise to Macdonald & Co for the distress and damage that the article caused them.

'Bookworm'

Privatisation

Gas attack

IF BRITISH GAS had wanted to undermine its old rival, the electricity industry, it could not have timed the counter-attack better. The Government's financial advisers, Kleinwort Benson, and the public relations firm Dewe Rogerson, were ready to launch themselves with gusto into the last weeks of the campaign to privatise 60 per cent of NatPowerGen, the producers of electricity, when British Gas announced that it intended to increase the price of gas by 35 per cent — if the gas was used to generate electricity.

The reason, said British Gas, was that demand would rise so much, from all the new gas-fired power stations, that it would be unable to perform its statutory duty of providing gas for people who wanted to use it for purposes like keeping warm and cooking. They would continue to be charged the old price.

Consumers are shielded from sudden price rises by Ofgas, the Office of Gas Supply, but there is no law to prevent the price to industry being increased again and again. This will happen when the demand rises, as the *Eye* has been warning ever since the idea of using gas to make electricity became fashionable. Even the energy group at Friends of the Earth embraced the idea, preferring more gas-fired power stations to a Severn barrage which might drive away the worms and upset the birds.

The electricity industry, sniffing a quick buck, did not want to listen to warnings. The right approach was laid down by energy secretary John Wakeham. At a secret City lunch he advised prospective investors to buy shares, sell them quickly, and hope to make a profit (much of which, in the case of small investors, will go to stockbrokers).

The invitation to buy electricity shares was being considered by 7.3 million prospective punters when the news of the gas explosion broke over their heads on 1 March.

Those who had shown interest had been favoured with a free copy of the 283-page main prospectus — to put on the bookshelf next to the 795-page main prospectus for the regional electricity companies. The new work, from the pen of Messrs Kleinwort Benson on behalf of the secretary of state for energy, holds out a glowing promise for the future:

"Combined Cycle Gas Turbine (CCGT) plant is likely to be the major form of new generating capacity constructed in England and Wales for at least the next five years. Natural gas is currently available at a competitive price for power generation... PowerGen is building a 900-megawatt CCGT at Kinllingholme. National Power is building a 650-megawatt CCGT power station on an adjacent site...

"CCGT power stations are under construction at Wilton, Corby, Peterborough and Barrow-in-Furness... Pembroke, Barking, Keadby, Coryton, Shotton, Rugby and Ryedale. A number of other proposals have been announced."

Before most of the recipients had read the encouraging words, British Gas had struck. Never before has B. Gas scored points for its witty in-swingers, but it deserved full credit for this one.

Why did not Mr Kleinwort, not to mention Mr Benson, see this one coming? It was, after all, forecast repeatedly in the *Eye*. Again and again, we said that once the demand for gas started to rise, the price would go up. In the last issue (762) we said: "Gas prices will soar as supplies are depleted." British Gas decided not to wait even that long.

Nobody paid us a penny for our (accurate) advice. Kleinwort Benson, on the other hand, will have been handsomely rewarded for getting it wrong. Rumour has it that the company was paid £150 million to put electricity into the market. Ms Ros Hedley-Miller, joint head of the operation, said: "I wish that were true." But she refused to say just how much they are to receive.

The whole operation to privatise electricity, including prospectuses, colour advertising and promotion (free drinks for the press), was to have cost £450 million according to Treasury forecasts. According to City sources it has actually cost £600 million.

Perhaps if the Government had been more generous with its money, it would have got better advice. We know that "Sir" Richard Giordano steered British Oxygen, where he is chairman, away from spending £200 million on a gasworks and that the company pays him £1,024,562 a year. He failed to save National Power, where he is a director, from investing in gas. It pays him only £15,000 a year (see *Eye* 762).

For the Government, the idea of relying on gas until the price goes up and supplies dwindle has one enormous attraction — it will make it possible to speed up the closure of coal mines. That means we will have to import more coal. Overseas suppliers will push up their prices as demand rises. Buying foreign coal will damage the balance of payments. And thousands more miners will go on the dole. But if that's what the market says, the market must rule.

Health Education

Sticky moments

JUST HOW does the hyper-efficient Health Education Authority, under its chief executive Dr Spencer Hagard, spend its money?

Within the past few weeks a large sum has been spent on printing several hundred thousand sticky correction slips for the recently republished *The Pregnancy Book*, one of the HEA's most popular publications. Better control of the sections that write, research and produce such texts would ensure errors happen only rarely, but when money is no object, why bother?

The HEA also recently scrapped a project on healthy living for women but only *after* spending a rumoured £300,000 on it and *before* the project had produced anything. Then there is the HEA's primary health care unit in Oxford, source of many headaches. Spending on this five-year project has included work on renovating former nurses' accommodation (now turned into administrative offices) at the Churchill Hospital in Oxford, which is not generally seen as part of the HEA's remit. Just what kind of management regime allows projects to commit and spend so much money without anyone being accountable? As the new finance director has tried to make clear, financial control is only one aspect of the HEA's problems.

Dr Hagard must surely be worried about the current Ramadan fiasco. The much-hyped *Look After Your Heart* (LAYH) campaign recently gave about £40,000 to an organisation called Clean Air to produce an anti-smoking poster for Ramadan (the period of daylight Muslim fasting). A brilliant idea — or it would have been had the Smoking Programme not already produced, er, an anti-smoking poster for Ramadan. (The LAYH version, incidentally, was produced without any consultation with the HEA and contains three medical mistakes.)

The frequent junkets (known as "retreats") also require explanation. Whenever managers want to discuss an "important" issue or a divisional director wants to talk about "future plans" with staff, rooms are booked at places like the opulent New Cavendish Hotel near Covent Garden or they travel — all expenses paid — to "healthy" locations such as the New Forest. Anyone who has ever spent hours queueing in a dilapidated national health hospital only to receive inadequate treatment might wonder how all this equates with good use of public money.

And why have the HEA offices at Hamilton House been so frequently redecorated and refurbished? The HEA has easily the best equipped and decorated offices in the NHS and staff who share the building continue to be amazed at the apparently bottomless pit of money at the authority's disposal. In its most recent reorganisation, the HEA evicted a coronary prevention project from the building in order to install a vital new photocopying area, creating a vital new post for an "photocopy executive".

Sir Donald Maitland, chairman of the authority, was told of low moral last autumn and appeared to believe it was "something to do with the warm weather".

Finance

Merlin meets the wizards of Oz

ANOTHER Irish Sea Bubble has burst, spattering egg over the faces of two of the Isle of Man's foremost citizens, the Stott brothers. Their Manx-based public company, Merlin International Properties, has only two choices left — receivership or acceptance of a bizarre and incredibly low bid.

From making a profit of £1 million in 1989 the company slumped into the red to the tune of £26 million in the year ending June 1990. In the course of its short life Merlin has managed to spend £42 million of investors' money and acquire contingent liabilities in excess of £200 million.

Merlin was formed in 1985 by brothers Dursley and Bryan Stott. Dursley is one of the Isle of Man's top stockbrokers. Bryan was a shrewd and respected estate agent and is now chairman of the Isle of Man Bank.

The first share issue was in 1986. A further issue in 1987 got the company a stock exchange listing. Also on the board are Australians Tom and Ian Hayson, father and son. They were given shares in consideration of assets brought into the company.

Of the ordinary shares, 62.7 per cent are in the hands of 10 past and present directors, giving them control over any issues requiring a vote. The 31 million £1 preference shares (which brought in an additional £10 million premium) were sold to private and institutional investors, many through the good offices of Dursley Stott.

The company bought and sold property, mostly among the directors, and apparently, since 1987, at a loss. Very little business was done on the open market. The major losses occurred in Merlin's dealings with its Australian directors, the Haysons.

As most shareholders in the Isle of Man are, or were, pals of Dursley and Bryan, or large institutions that do not like to admit losses publicly, it is unlikely that any of them will be brave enough to call for an investigation. Which is a pity, because an investigation could turn up some interesting facts about how deals were done.

Amid bullish publicity, Merlin announced in 1987 that it had invested £900,280 in a development site at Sydney Harbour, Australia. It wasn't quite that simple. The money was used to obtain a 23.3 per cent stake in one of the Haysons' unit trusts which had a lease on the site. The trust then promptly distributed the money to the unit holders, Haysons and Merlin, as a dividend.

Merlin's accounts make no mention of a dividend received. But that year it did show a profit.

Two years later, Merlin decided to sell this and other Australian stakes back to the Haysons, at a loss of millions of pounds. Not only that — £6.6 million was deferred payment, due this year. According to the auditors it is unlikely to be received. Merlin also guaranteed bank loans taken by the Haysons for the purchase to the tune of £219 million.

Part of the deal left Merlin with no right to inspect accounts of the purchasing companies, so it could never know if these guarantees are likely to be called on. Merlin's chief executive said it's possible they might be.

Such deals — and some of the fat fees paid to associated and subsidiary companies — could be worth investigating. Unfortunately Merlin's auditors, Pannell Kerr Forster, are a bit hamstrung. Their offices in the Isle of Man are rented from Merlin International Properties.

The names of the companies involved in making the bid for the company, an offer of 5p per share which values Merlin at £2.9 million, are Luiro and Estonia Venture, both names associated with the Baltic area.

The Haysons' origins are in the Baltic. This is presumably a coincidence.

In the City

AS THE debate rages over who should shoulder the cost of bailing out FIMBRA and regulating/compensating for its 7000 financial advisor members it is reassuring to know that so high on the agenda of the fearless fraud fighters of the all-seeing Securities & Investments Board are such matters as the quality of the SIB staff canteen and the furnishing of newly ennobled chairman Sir David Walker's office.

Reports that the canteen required because of the paucity of suitable neighbourhood alternatives, may cost up to £1 million to equip and run are surely malicious. So too are comments about the quality of the carpets in the chairman's office which is merely furnished commensurate with his status as the City's number one enemy *of the fraud*sman. Or is it their victims, who he insists only merit compensation to the tune of £48,000.

THOSE, like the Imperial Tobacco pensioners, who have come to know and appreciate the true depth of the caring approach to its employees pursued by Hanson will be reassured by the recent events concerning Peabody Coal, acquired almost a year ago.

In January Peabody, the biggest American coal miner, pleaded guilty to criminal charges of tampering with mine safety tests. It was fined $500,000, the largest ever fine assessed for non-fatal violations of mine safety laws.

This followed the discovery in 1989 that supervisors at three company mines were deliberately tampering with the filters worn by miners which measure concentrations of the deadly coal dust that causes black lung disease or pneumoconiosis. If the dust level indicated by the filters exceeds levels considered safe the mine may be fined or shut down.

Federal regulators discovered that Peabody employees were blowing coal dust off the filters before sending them to the government laboratory to be checked, thereby seeking to conceal unsafe dust levels.

A subsequent year-long investigation resulted in Peabody's guilty plea and an agreement to co-operate with the ongoing Federal investigation to discover who was responsible.

This is the second time Peabody has pleaded guilty to tampering with mine safety devices. In 1982 it pleaded guilty to thirteen charges relating to one of its mines and was fined $130,000.

All this naturally was most upsetting to those twin Thatcher peers, Lords Hanson and White. (There is no truth whatsoever in the suggestion that the latter's peerage was in any way related to the Hanson stalking horse role in PowerGen which could have been a possible future Peabody customer.)

Hanson bought into Peabody after the illegalities had been discovered and did not achieve management control until last May. There is no evidence that Peabody top executives were aware of the offences until informed by Federal regulators. Furthermore Peabody is now conducting its own investigation and has issued a new policy on safety to its mine managers.

Hopefully Hanson were informed of the Federal investigation by Peabody as the Hanson mouthpiece, vice chairman Martin Taylor declared last December: "We were nine months in the company before buying it and knew all about its liabilities and assets."

No wonder Hanson, which paid £653 million for Peabody, subsequently disclosed a £1.5 billion provision to cover Peabody's future liabilities for pneumoconiosis and other health and pension related claims.

IT IS good to see that doyen of the white collar crime defence bar, Robert Harman QC, fresh from his towering performance in Guinness One which won all our hearts (even if his client Sir Jack Lyons received a guilty verdict and £3 million fine), once again on parade in Blue Arrow.

OBSERVERS of Cap'n Bob, which do not it must be said include the American Press for which the Fat Man must certainly be duly grateful, have watched with wonder his sudden appearance as the saviour of New York's strike-bound and heavily loss making *Daily News*.

Maxwell Communication Corporation is trying to sell assets to reduce long term debts from £1.7 billion to £1.4 billion by end March. *The European* is still losing heavily — one informed estimate is £1 million a week. The Liechtenstein controlled Maxwell private interests are looking to raise funds by floating off Mirror Group Newspapers this summer despite the poor picture for circulation and revenues. Despite the soaraway stock market MCC shares are anchored firmly close to their low point — even below the price at which the Maxwell Foundation paid £45 million last month to take its stake over 70 per cent in yet another failed support operation.

So if the New York *Daily News* deal goes through just how would Maxwell publicly or privately finance a newspaper which could lose more than £40 million this year, will take at least a year to turn around, needs a heavy investment, maybe up to $300 million, in new printing equipment and comes with major liabilities in terms of severance payments to the unionized labour force?

As ever only Maxwell knows. But he would be paid some £32 million by the Chicago Tribune group to take it away. And it could always be closed down and the assets sold off if the unions fail to play ball.

The New York unions would do well to remember what happened with the short-lived *Scottish Daily News* and *London Daily News*.

But at least it must be reassuring for the Maxwell bankers to realise that he is still out there spending their money.

THE RARELY spotted Lesser Michael Ashcroft — not to be confused with the more richly plumaged Greater Michael Ashcroft, now believed t be extinct — is once more expected to visit these shores on 1 May after a long and all but invisible sojourn in Florida and Belize. He now has an office in the upscale Florida resort of Boca Raton — "mouth of the mouse" in Spanish.

Ashcroft is expected at New Scotland Yard, along with his chums Sir Denis Thatcher and Home Secretary Kenneth Baker, for a dinner to celebrate the Community Action Trust.

It is no doubt purely coincidental that this is well into the new tax year and that Ashcroft was reputedly last spotted on these shores just before the start of the current tax year last April 5. Were Ashcroft to have been out of Britain for a full tax year then it would possibly be open to him to assume non-residence for tax purposes. Perhaps ADT shareholders and the Prince of Wales, whose Prince's Trust Ashcroft/ADT support, should be told.

MORE FROM the You Can't Win Them All world of investment analysts.

Last July Philip Gibbs at Laing & Cruickshank put out a firm "buy" report for Chancery, the financial services group, at 135p. The shares had already come down from 179p.

"We believe that the potential rewards of investment outweigh the risks at current levels", he confidently declared. "The shares may trade quietly for a few months but are a worthwhile if slightly speculative bet on lower interest rates."

Last month Chancery called in administrators because of its over-extended position in the wrecked property market. The shares were suspended at 36p.

Oh, "Lang & Bang"just happens to have been broker to Chancery.

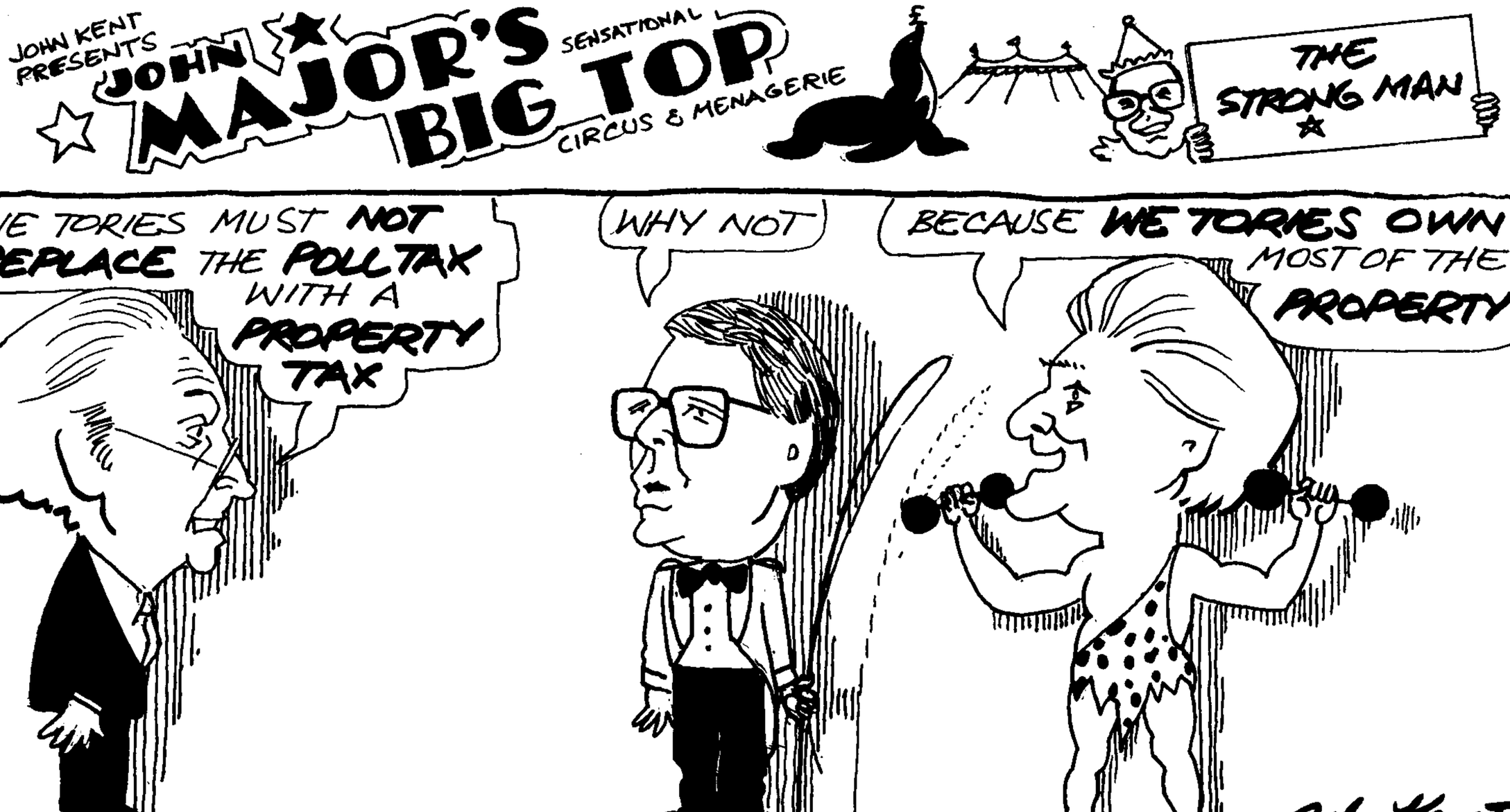
THE Daily Mail's somewhat less than glowing detailed profile of the rise and fall of City PR man Brian Basham curiously omitted three interesting points.

He was once a *Daily Mail* City office employee.

Another former employer who was less than full of praise — PR man John Addey — earned the description from Lord Denning: "No one would believe a word he said."

The reason why another *Mail* source, former colleague John Coyle, was missing from the main board of the Basham company Broad Street Group.

'Slicker'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Obituary, the Independent.

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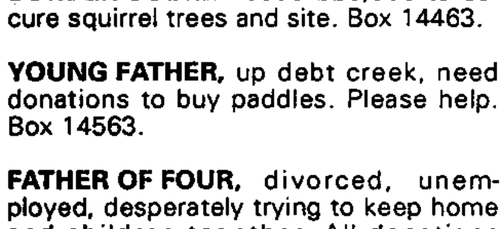

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AS RECOMMENDED by BBC2's Food and Drink, Thames Reports and LWT's 6 O'Clock Live — DINNER DATES. We give wonderful dinner parties at sophisticated West End venues for discerning single people. Stringfellows, The Savoy, The White House, etc etc. Please telephone 081-741 1252/081-748 2648/081-741 1173.

ARE YOU IN TASMANIA? I hate Oxfordshire. May I offer you a delicious cigarette a la 8/9-2? Box 15363.

MAKE FRIENDS WORLDWIDE with International Penfriends. Details from J. CROSBIE, 23 Mansefield, Grantshouse, Duns, Berwickshire.

TRAVELLING COMPANIONS bringing together like-minded people who wish to travel, UK or abroad (non-group event). Contact: P&S 071-708 4344.

MOSCOW CONNECTION. 400 cultured Russian females, including students, doctors, lawyers, psychiatrists, teachers, musicians, etc, seek happiness with marriage minded gentlemen. 081-505 4095 (office hours).

THE SUCCESSFUL WAY for professional people to meet is through THE PICTURE DATING AGENCY, the caring/confidential service. Be sent lists of compatible partners with their photos. For details call 081-297 1424 (anytime).

ASIAN INTRODUCTIONS. Tel: 0533 610266.

PERSON TO PERSON — Britain's brightest singles magazine. Free details (PE/2) PO Box 4, Goring RG8 9DN.

CZECH MATE World's first anglo-Czechoslovakian agency. Hundreds of stunning ladies, lawyers, doctors, architects and chemists seeking marriage. 0582 25960.

HUNGRY FOR companionship? Meet single ladies at lavish London restaurant parties. MEET 'N' EAT: 071-629 5534.

WE NEED MEN — real men! to join our gourmet club. If you're single, 30+, call the ladies at THE SINGLE GOURMET DINING CLUB. 071-937 4522.

SOLDIER SEEKS RELIEF by post first, in person on return. Correspondence and photo please. Box 15063.

WARRIORS of the wasteland. Two anti-tank helicopter pilots seek female companions. Can you handle 17 inches of penetration four times a minute? Photo preferable. Apply "Dogsknob" and "Ringstinger". Box 15163.

CALVARY OFFICERS BATMEN. We're 11 beefy lads who appreciate intellectual, well-educated, glamorous and humorous well-to-do females. Age no problem! So, come one ladies, we're the bit of rough you've been yearning for. Photos a must. We also have lonely, rich, w/e officer who's in need of cheering up. Weirdos and leatherettes welcome. All letters answered. Box 15263.

LIVELY LONDON FEMALE attractive, 30, seeks intelligent, fun, Army/RAF officer (Gulf based or not) for friendship, adventure, etc. Must be single, 26/40, enjoy travel, politics, the Arts. Photo please. Box 16163.

DISILLUSIONED RAF pilot in Gulf, following unrequited love affair with camel (female), seeks hump of a different kind. Letters, tapes, photo. Box 16263.

2 DASHING YOUNG majors on the front line in the Gulf seek amusing, intelligent and risque correspondence from attractive, adventurous young ladies. Photos essential. Box 16363.

MED DOCT, slender gentleman 5'9" single 43 handsome sensitive caring romantic good-humoured kind secure interested in fine art travel music theatre Europe and children. Seeks attractive graceful intelligent lady 30-37, 5'7" or taller, with a good education and strength, desire and will for friendship leading to a meaningful nurturing relationship. Photo appreciated. Box 0163.

SUSAN W please ring urgently. I miss you. Bill.

TALL CULTURED MAN, mid-forties, living and working away from home. Genuine nice guy, kind, gentle and sensual, seeks lady with a wobble on her wiggle for lust and friendship. West London, Slough, Windsor, Reading. Box 0263.

HAVE YOU GOT security and stagnation in suburbia? Would you like to try sensuality and sensitivity in single cream? Discreet male 34 seeks female 20-40 (W Yorks). Box 0363.

ATTRACTIVE, PROFESSIONAL, female, 28, seeks intelligent, N/S, unattached male for fun, mega-curries and long relationship. Wilts/Glos/Oxon. Photo appreciated. Box 0463.

BRENTWOOD YUGOSLAV LADY (49) attractive slim non-smoker would like to meet unattached male 45-50. Photo is must. Box 0563.

GOOD-LOOKING GUY, tall, slim, late 40s, unattached, professional and successful, off to the Americas to work, seeks adventurous female partner 35+ to explore together. Box 0663.

PERSONABLE SHY MALE professional (28) with virginity intact seeks attractive lady to ensure he loses it. Photo. London. Box 0763.

ATTRACTIVE WOMAN, 34, dark hair, blue eyes, 5'6", shapely, alone, seeks unattached male, 34-46, for country walks, cosy dinners and overseas travel. Cheshire/anywhere. Box 0863.

INTELLIGENT MALE, 41, divorced, new to London seeks person of the female persuasion to share movies etc on weekend visits. Anywhere considered. Box 0963.

There will be no more Eye Love in the Gulf after this issue, but replies to these and previous ads will continue to be forwarded.

SINGLE MUM seeks live-in position with single dad. Box 1263.

SLIM, BLONDE, ATTRACTIVE professional woman (Exeter) urgently needs unattached 40ish heterosexual professional male. Humour and interest in Arts vital. Box 1363.

PROVE THERE'S INTELLIGENT LIFE in the North. Not poor, 43, seeks slimmish attractive lady to 38 all usual and unusual interests for exploring life, each other, Lancs/Yorks, photograph please. Box 1463.

VERY INTELLIGENT, completely zany Yahoo Serious or Emo Philips lookalike required to save voluptuous, green-eyed weirdo (23) from chartered accountant types. Box 1563.

SLIM FIT BUSINESSMAN 34, separated after 11 year marriage wishes to find true love with attractive lady who is probably 25-35 with open mind and sense of humour. London. Box 1663.

MALE, 30, OPTIMISTIC, humorous, eccentric, successful career, own cottage, boat, etc, requires educated lady with own sense of style and imagination who enjoys crazy spontaneous activities along with sensual evenings around the fire. South Coast. Box 1063.

SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSMAN, romantic, loyal, kind, into children, family life, classical music, jazz, countryside, boats, seeks tall (5'7"+) long-legged sensitive warm N/S lady 26-35 to spoil endlessly in sensational Dorset coast home. Photo please. ALA. Box 1163.

SOFT SPOKEN Irishman with a glint in his eye, is generous, loving, educated, professional, cultured, well travelling/travelled and very pleasing to the lady's eye wants to spend his next 40 years in bliss adoring and pleasing a beautiful, green eyed lady. Genuine. No ugly people need apply. Thames valley. Write with phone no. Box 12662.

ZEALOUS, unpretentious, intelligent, imaginative, innocent and sophisticated, virtuous, reliable, loveable, romantic friend (30-45, must love classic music passionately) wanted by a similar introvert lady (35) for the intuitive perception and appreciation of music, books and life. Box 5762.

AFFECTIONATE LOYAL MAN young 48, single parent but independent, wishes to spread his wings again at weekends with intelligent, romantic younger woman. North West, but anywhere for right person. Photo please. Box 1863.

THIRTY-EIGHT YEAR OLD bachelor, male, interested in music and books, seeks female living in South West London for friendship. Photo and phone number please. Box 1963.

GOOD-LOOKING YOUNG Jewish (N/O) businessman 33 own luxury home excellent life-style needs beautiful educated girlfriend 20-30 for evenings out, weekends away, travel and more. Are you special? Send letter, photo, phone for initial reply/chat. Box 2063.

FANCY YOURSELF as a castaway? Businessman Crusoe, tall, attractive, young 44, resident Bucks, has won a holiday for two in luxury/sporty resort, British Virgin Islands, March/April, and seeks beautiful, intelligent, fun-loving Girl Friday, 20-35, with keen sense of humour to share it to the full. Please write with recent photo. Box 2163.

PROFESSIONAL MALE 38, looks younger, married but missing excitement in life. Seeks stylish and sexy lady to share candlelit dinners, good conversation and laughter in bed. London and surrounding area. Box 2263.

MAN OF WORDS AND DEEDS, not unhandsome, 43, seeks pretty, witty, sport lady love for fun and future. Box 2363.

MAN, 30, TALL, well-built, married and in demanding profession seeks woman (smokeless) 20-40 for mutual relaxation. Photo/interesting letter ensures reply. West Midlands. Box 2463.

SCHEHERAZADE SEEKS SINBAD or Arabian Knight. Attractive professional single lady, 30, seeks attractive professional single man for fun and friendship initially Portsmouth South. Box 2563.

PROFESSIONAL MALE requires female 28 to 48 companion for Caribbean holiday. Date to arrange. Just want to relax enjoy the sun, food, etc. Photo appreciated. ALA. Box 2663.

TALL SLIM WOMAN 30 Socialist vegetarian recently relocated Manchester seeks male for conversation, outings, walking, friendship, etc. Box 2763.

LOOKING FOR FEMALE 28 to 48, status unimportant. I professional male, easy going, for fun or serious relationship. Have many social friends but need some loving. Own flat Surrey/London area. If poss. please send photo, will return. Box 2863.

ROMANTIC YOUNG 50 athletic male, successful director, fun loving, sensual, yawningly tied, missing excitement to life seeks lady in similar situation. Discretion assured. Thames Valley. Box 2963.

UNIVERSITY STUDENT, model, musician, male, 21, seeks beautiful intelligent female unimpressed by usual bullshitters. Photo essential. Box 1763.

HANDSOME DEVIL (36), seeks succulent, slender, succubus (18-30ish) for hellraising, photo? Box 8860.

GENTLEMAN aged 37 with good looks and a successful career seeking very attractive lady with a gentle laid-back domesticated nature to enjoy good times in an honest, loyal, one-to-one relationship. Photo and phone number please Box 6062.

ELIGIBLE BACHELOR, 31, tall, strong, handsome and kind, seeks pretty, blonde, public-school girlfriend, 18-22. (Send photo). Box 12161.

ATTRACTIVE TIED lonely lady 36 living deepest Surrey seeks tall intelligent humorous man to show her love and romance do exist. Photo and date of birth please. Box 3063.

PSYCHIATRIST with wickedly green eyes: Your "youngish" humorous respondent still awaits luncheon. Call me! Box 3163.

MALE (36) CINEMA BUFF seeks slim well educated girl (23-30) to share back row Cardiff/S Wales. Box 3263.

GIRLS do you believe in happy endings? Bestselling author, 38, tall, slim, good-looking, funny, seeks beautiful heroine, 23-38, sparky, warm, passionate, intelligent, for new chapter. All long, honest letters with photos answered. Box 3363.

FAIR-HAIRED, fetching, female (32) fit, fun and fertile of mind, seeks romance in cultural wilderness of W Midlands. Photo please. Box 3463.

ENTERPRISING SENIOR businessman, now late 50s and semi-retired, 6' tall and non-smoker (other vices possible!). Attractive female partner could do much to complete life's pleasure! Photograph appreciated. Box 3763.

MARATHON MAN married, 43, seeks honest laughing n/s lady to 'run' wild with. Essex/N London. Box 3863.

SENSE OF HUMOUR? laughing female sought by city male, 28. Box 3963.

IMAGINATIVE, SENSITIVE graduate, male, 31. North London based, with many enthusiasms, seeks open-hearted woman to become another of them. Box 4063.

THIS PASSIONATE, desirable, voluptuous blonde with brains and a fulfilling career, needs a partner, not a meal ticket! You're dark, successful and happy, 35-50, and understand the difference between mergers and acquisitions. Thames Valley. Box 4163.

HANDSOME AMUSING green upper class chappie 35 with PHD seeks beautiful girl with brains, red nails, nice legs, a xxx like a peach, amazing personality and stunning wit. Box 4263.

BUBBLY BLONDE accountant, 30, seeks successful, charming, Arnold Schwarzenegger clone to help balance books. South Wales area. Box 4363.

LADY (WELL, NOT ALWAYS) seeks intelligent, humorous man, 36-50, North Yorkshire, for cheerful, deeply meaningless relationship. Box 4463.

FIRST MILLION won't be long despite this bloody recession. "A" for Amusing entrepreneur early 40s seeks squadron of nymphets aged 18-29 and "mental nymphets" aged 30-45. Box 4563.

BACHELOR LAWYER, youngish 40, seeks discreet sophisticated lady for affectionate lighthearted uninvolved fun Midlands/London/South West. Box 4663.

MALE MARRIED, 50, seeking to rekindle smouldering embers with passionate but soft lady of similar disposition. Total discretion needed for secret happiness. Box 4763.

MALE LATE FORTIES tall balding seeks lady any age for discreet daytime meetings and outings. Box 4863.

MALE GRADUATE, public school educated, 31, tall darkish and attractive, own business, hanging on for grim death, seeks tall articulate and attractive female to share blues and spliffs in west country. Mugshot appreciated. Box 3563.

INDEPENDENT, ATTRACTIVE professional lady (30) realises work is not everything, enjoys drinking/smoking, nights out, romantic nights in and lie-ins. Seeks good-looking, caring, sincere, single male to share life with. Beds, Cambs, anywhere. Photo appreciated. Box 3663.

CUDDLY SLIM caring attractive brunette late 50s non-smoker seeks educated untied gentleman who needs lots of love and affection. NW. Box 4963.

SECRET LOVER NEEDED who is intelligent tall slim attractive feminine glamorous seductive 35-45 who likes to be on top. I'm 32 tall slim fit very good-looking well-educated affluent shy boyish charming humorous and married. Tea? Discretion assured. Tel No. instructions please. Box 5063.

GOOD-LOOKING, independent career girl, late 20s, desires single sporty solvent 30s guy with wit for entertainment. Replies given to photos and phone numbers. Box 5163.

GENT, 40, successful and single, seeks pretty young lady who wishes to be spoilt, for fun and romance, North West. Box 5263.

PLEASANTLY TYPICAL Leo man in his early 40s with no ties desires an unusual woman. Beautiful enough for love-making, inventive enough to enjoy the unusual, fun enough to be with and relaxed enough to get the most out of life. I am well-educated, as successful as hard work and a sense of humour will allow, but I am told my real riches are my warmth, generosity and sense of fun. London/anywhere. Box 5363.

I always laughed at these ads, but I met a fantastic woman and now we're getting married.
Eye Love advertiser

OXON/BERKS slim, attractive professional male, 50s, married seeks slim, sensuous woman for discreet friendship weekdays. Phone number. Box 5463.

TALL, 6'5" attractive unattached city broker, 31, seeks companionship and more from attractive kind female graduate or career woman. Must enjoy open-top motoring in summer. Photo and phone number preferred. London. Box 5563.

DAMASK ROSE, growing wild, tall and free, longs to bloom again for flower loving man. Box 5663.

INDEPENDENT, ATTRACTIVE, humorous woman, 29, seeks similar male for fun, friendship and footsie. Midlands. Box 5763.

SAGITTARIAN MAN, fit, 45, Oxbridge, has brain wit and style but unsensual wife. Is ready for a rich, mad affair with high calibre petite beauty (but no small bore) who similarly seeks passion. Leeds/N Yorks. Box 5863.

GRACIOUS, HUMOROUS, intelligent lady sought by creative baldy aquarian professional, 28, London, to correspond on open heart surgery. Box 5963.

WEST YORKSHIRE, professional, solvent, graduate male (39), interested in arts and outdoors, seeks attractive, intelligent, understanding female (25-40) for outings, friendship and more. Photo and letter appreciated. Box 6063.

DIVORCED, FUNNY male smoker aged 28 offers right woman freedom and cosy evenings in Beds area (?) Letter and photo please. Box 6163.

QUIET, ROMANTIC GUY (37), loves music/movies/art, seeks non-smoking soulmate (18-35) Glasgow area. Photo please. Box 6263.

HANDSOME LONDONER 49 tall slim sensitive divorced Jewish, successful MD, interested country living, music, films, travel, cooking, seeks 28-37 lady with charm. Box 6363.

TALL, ATTRACTIVE, dynamic, professional female 28 loves busy successful life, but misses out on meeting like-minded men. Relate to this? Photo please. London. Box 6463.

ATTRACTIVE BLACK GIRL seeks millionaire. Box 6563.

PROFESSIONAL MAN, early forties, stuck in unhappy marriage, seeks girlfriend for fun and romance. S Wales. Box 6663.

HELP! DISABLED MALE, 40, seeks understanding patient female to rekindle libido's cooling embers. Oxford/S East. Box 6763.

ARE YOU 30-40 rugged, humorous, educated, honourable and genuine? Very attractive brunette, 31, wants to hear from you. (Photo please.) Box 6863.

WIDOWER (London-based) 60 plus would like occasional meeting with female, active, intelligent and with sense of humour, interested in antiquarian books. Box 7063.

WILD AT HEART attractive, intelligent, Northern accented city gentleman, 26, 5'9½" simply seeks sensual intelligent lady for great times. Box 7163.

PRODIGIOUSLY HANDSOME male, upmarket, educated, tall, 40s, seeks genuinely attractive woman for discreet term relationship. London. Box 7263.

FIVE TIMES PUBLISHED author, 34, last relationship ended through his being 'too affectionate', seeks London woman for whom that would be an asset. Photo appreciated. Box 7363.

GOOD-LOOKING, 30 year old male enjoys life and seeks attractive woman to help find the magic. London. Box 7663.

YOUNG, 55, MALE, seeks intelligent, humorous female to share and care with. Must be willing to live a full life. Manchester area. Box 7763.

WOMAN, N BUCKS, petite, bright, pretty, 32, seeks financially secure man, unattached, 30-45, attractive, gentle, kind, to love, spoil and enthral her. Letter plus photo. Box 7863.

CERTAIN AS I AM that these ads don't work, anything's worth a try, once! Witty wanker, facing forty, going greenish, seeks foxy female. Sincerity is key but nice knockers not a problem, and dinner's for free! Box 7963.

TALL, DARK, COUNTRY LADY would like to meet cultured gent, 45/65, with infectious sense of humour. East Midlands. Box 8063.

WOODY ALLEN seeks Mia Farrow (18-25) for love and friendship. Photos appreciated and returned. West Mids. Box 8163.

AGENT COOPER seeks Audrey, for exciting passionate affair. Essex/London. Photo. Box 8263.

FORTYISH, DIVORCED MALE seeks sensuous female 25-35, stockings and suspenders preferred. West Midlands. Box 8363.

FEMME FATALE, longing to reciprocate passionate love, seeks man of letters and substance (muscular, stocky/chunky build). Oxon. Box 8463.

UNATTACHED OLDER MAN, incurable wanderer, temporarily settled in Berlin, seeks attractive, intelligent, balanced female looking for excitement and caring. Photo please. Box 8563.

CULTURAL PESSIMIST, 26, slim, fit, presentable never places personal ads, seeks woman who never answers them. Interested in opera, theatre, films, books. Midlands. Box 8663.

SO, YOU WOULD NOT normally read these adverts, well I wouldn't normally write one. But here we both are disillusioned with the "social game". You're looking for attractive male, 31, 5'11", sporty, a challenge. You are female, slim, with a spark. Age, politics, kids, location, colour — who cares!! It's you that's important. Letter, phone and photo please. Box 7463.

MAN OF WARMTH, charm, humour and boyish good looks, 35-45, sought by gamine female counterpart. Bath. Box 7563.

TRAVEL WRITER, recently retired from senior position in a different field, divorced, seeks well-educated female travelling companion over 35 for journeys of about three weeks each. Must be enterprising, energetic and willing to accept discomfort. Box 9063.

DORSET, 49, fit married professional man seeks buxom female for mutual enjoyment and satisfaction. Discretion vital. Box 9163.

ATTRACTIVE FEMALE intelligent, 28, seeks man for friendship and fun, 24 to 40, North West. Photo please. Box 9263.

MEDITERRANEAN MAN, 42, very attractive, sincere, loyal and wealthy, looking for a very pretty, slim, educated 5'2"-5'7", 23-33, preferably with dark hair and Latin or Greek looks for a serious relationship. Photo appreciated and returned. Box 8763.

GENTLEMAN (35) single N/S 6'3" would like to meet very attractive sensual young woman, dinner, theatre, art, galleries, music, disco, photo please. Box 8863.

BRUSSELS, single male of Greek origin working with an international organisation (39, 5'6", 78kgs) seeks high sociocultural level, warm, receptive and charming petite lady, maximum 35, for permanent relationship. Recent photo/phone please. Box 8963.

26 YEAR OLD "Meryl Streep look-a-like" (sic Nigel Dempster) casting for gorgeous co-star. Photo and CV a must. No UGS. Box 9363.

SLIM, INTELLIGENT, male sensualist, 35, permanently married, seeks similar female for discreet intimate friendship. London. Photo. Box 9463.

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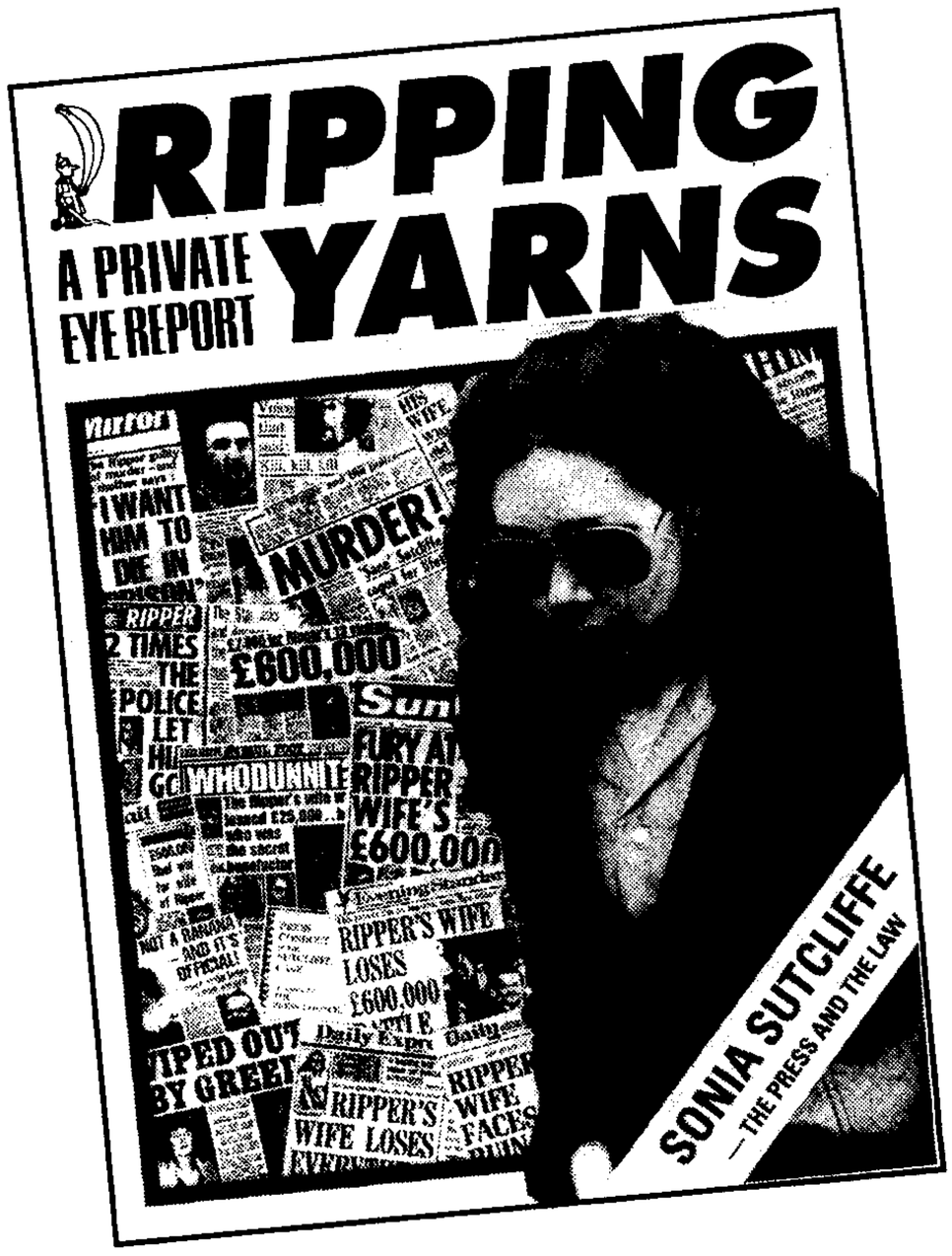

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